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THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

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The Dawn in Britain

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'TRAVELS IN ARABIA DESERTA



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BOOK XIII

O if my temples were distain'd with wine,
And girt in girlonds of wilde yvie twine,
How could I reare the Muse on stately stage,
And teach her tread aloft in buskin fine,
With queint Bellona in her equipage!

EDMUND SPENSER.

The Shepheards Calendar; October.

ARGUMENT

BRITONS' first battle with the Romans. Bodva, war-fury, incites Trugon, an archer, to shoot at Togodumnos. The warlord is wounded ; Britons withdraw them to deep woods. The king's last behest and burial. The Britons' host remove, at sunrising. Caratacus, now arrived, is saluted Lord-of-war ! Strife, among his captains. Britons send back, to bury their dead. Fugitives bring word, that Calleva was taken by the Romans !

Britons march. Caratacus communes, in the way, with his chief captains. Segontorix, that night, harries the Romans' *castra*. Aulus, at dawn, sends forth his legions. Vespasian is hardly saved, by his son, Titus. Aulus blows repair. Belerions now arrive, and the Silures and Demetans. The warlord, again, leads forth the Britons' army. Till noon, they expect battle. Then comes Thorolf, with his Almain bands ! Story of the overthrow of Varus' legions.

Thorolf now proffers himself, to fight, singly, with chief captains of the Romans. Then Moelmabon's four sons fence the Almain ethling, with their strong warriors. Certain Roman Gauls, having Aulus' license, go forth, to chastise those insolent Almain. They are four hundred men ; which array them, in four bands. They choose one Bassus their captain. Bassus is slain ; and Merion and Ferriog, sons of Moelmabon, fall. Aulus now recalls those Roman Gauls. Waterers of Roman camp, are surprised and slain. Atrebat course again, by night, the legions' *castra*. At new day, legionaries clamour

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to battle. Britons, enranged in arms, chant war-songs of bard Carvilios. The battle joined. Bodvocos is taken. Caratacus sends chariots, to fall on the hindward of the Romans. Aulus, again, sounds recall. Segontorix, a third time, (now with Camog and Morfran,) courses the legions' night-camps.

Nemeton stirs new strife, among the Britons' dukes. Segontorix, with his Atrebats, withdraw from king Caratacus. An ancient druid arrives, bearing grave word of Mona's oracle. Melyn, warrior-bard, sings of heroes dead. Britons, by night-time, pass over Thames. King Caradoc, now, divides his war-chariots into four courses. Ordovices, with their war-renowned king, Kynan, the Hammeraxe, arrive.

Aulus marches to the conquest of Corinium. Beichiad's chariots assail the marching legions. The Briton dune. Bodvocos, by command of Aulus, is set forth, in the sight of his citizens, which look from the wall. Caer Corinium is taken. In night-tempest, certain of Beichiad's charioteers entered, secretly, in the conquered town, fire the first house-eaves. Those assay, then, to save Bodvocos: but are met with, by the watch, and slain. King Bodvocos' head is impaled, in sight of all the Britons!

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THE three kings riding, in one royal chariot,
(For few eyes might discern king Togodumnos !¹)
Hurling, widewhere, swift javelins ; bloody heaps,
Of breathless carcases, make to Camulus,
(Swart battle-god,) of Romans' foot and horse.
Covers, white powderous cloud, the slaughter-field ;
Whence gleam of arms, like tongues of flame, is seen.
There fell a sudden rain then, from the gods :
Which glisters, in the sun, like golden hairs ;
And earth upgave sweet savour of her sod,
Mingled with iron stink of sweat and blood.

But when, anew, the battle-plain appears,
Like to a star, shines, in the warlord's scythe-cart,
The brazen eagle of a Roman legion !
From chariot, which, like royal osprey, stooped,
Mongst Roman glaives, the warlord's hand had cleft
Arm that it bare, from shoulder ; statured soldier,

¹ Dion Cassius' Rom. Hist.

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Whom clothed a wolf's hide, over his bronze harness.
Wherefore that legion, every man, rush on,
With trump and cry of soldiers and centurions !
Like as would each one save, from death, his son ;
Wherein, in vain, confused, long, shielded ranks,
(Still hoping to cut off that royal war-cart,)
They hurl. The king comes lightly, from them, forth,
His brethren him beside : is every dart,
Which issues from his hand, a Roman's death !

Was then, or envying new accord and league,
Mongst Britons wont, by factions, to be rent ;
Or that, among the gods of strife, she was
Not called, to feast of their war-sacrifices ;
Bodva, war-fury, like to hoodie crow,
Flagging her swart-sheen wings, accoasting low,
Flies, shooting out her neck, with serpent's eyes,
(Which make men mad, to pierce their adversaries,)
O'er bloody slaughter-field : and joying crakes
The fiend, to look on mortal miseries !

And she, now, breathed an hollow memory,
In villain breast of wight of Troynovant ;
Light archer, running with the Kentish chariots,
Concerning harm, false-deemed to have been done,
In days forepast of royal Tasciovant,¹

¹ Father of king Cunobelin.

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To the man's sire. That ancient, with last breath,
Bequeathed undying quarrel, to his son ;
Whose son this Trugon. Trugon, to-day, loost,
In field, who valiant bowman, all his shafts ;
Save one remaineth, in his arrows' case.
This curséd forkhead Bodva now drew forth :
And set it, dazing, Trugon, on his string.

Yet made the felon prayer to his war-god ;
That only it might glance, before the face
Of the three kings, then should his soul have rest.
But the hag her hands, unseen, put on his hands,
Which pluck the spended string up to his breast.
And yet his arm so quakes, for dread of gods
And men ; that he the shaft but loosely shot !

Tumbles aloft, as tosst of windy gusts,
The arrow. It snatcht the feathered fiend, in
flight,
And guides the bitter forkhead ; which, ah ! pierced
Hath, from the backward, nape of Togodumnos !
Then she her heinous burnished wings displayed ;
And sought, from view of gods, herself to hide.

The fiend sith flits, like shadow, o'er much forest ;
Till she arrives to dune, in far North March ;
And outrage breathes, in froward woman's breast,
Bright CARTISMANDUA, fell Brigantine queen ;

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Who, royal witch, with hell's presumptuous spirits,
Consorts, and scorns her warlike lord Venutios.

But seen that scathe! 'sigh, with ten thousand
throats ;

Blue Britons, like to barren Winter blast,
Which shakes snow, from her wings, in reeling pines'
Dark forest : or as shipmen when, in storm,
They see, go by the board, their lofty mast.
Rose, contrarywise, exulting cries of Romans !
Viewed the enemies' duke to fall ; and, from his
hands,

Issue the reins. Beat, on cart's crated brim,
His sacred head, alas. Amidst thick strife,
Stood still the Britons' hearts ! Blue hands of
warriors,

As nightmare them oppressed, forget to smite.

Leapt, from their thrones, beneath the foster-earth,
Heard great strange voice sound ! in their dread
abodes ;

(Whose vaults are shaken of vast battle-tread,)
The gods of darkness. At prayer of all gods,
Drave Belin down his flaming wheels ; and Taran
Covered the heavens, with clouds, like mourning
weed.

Night falls, which parts the two contending armies. .

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Known was the stature of king Togodumnos,
To Trinobantine Trugon, which him smote ;
Now cowering in thick bush, in wind and wet,
In the dim field. He dreadeth every sound !
His craven heart hears death, in every voice,
Of men far-off! He would, mongst thick-heaped
corses,

He might be hid, from heaven's accusing light.

Last, by incitement, of his angry gods,
Unto whom he durst not look, who gapes, for dread,
Pluckt, from his archer's belt, bronze crooked knife,
He, (his grandsire's was,) his own judge, rove there-
with,

His gorge ! and Trugon fell back, gurgling blood ;
Whence, in the steep air, flitted his vile ghost.
It seized sky-riding furies ; and they bound,
On height, to wild wings of aye-rushing tempest.

Withdrawn, now, on both parts, were the two
armies.

Caterfs of Britons, weary, full of wounds,
As they that mourn, lodge, drooping, on wet earth ;
Nor yet men kindle fires. Under oak-boughs,
In groves, they sit, about their lords and ensigns.

Behold the fainting sire borne, by them, forth !

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Kneeling, upstayed, twixt Camog and Morfran ;
Not fully quick he is, but yet in life.
Their loved lord, him, those erst impetuous steeds,
With battle-blood, as mavis' breast, their breasts
And haughty necks, fleckt ; looking ofttime back,
Now, draw forth, in the dim grove, a soft pace.
The white-enameled, shrill, bronze-axed, warlord's
 scythe-cart,
Gore-blackened rolls : and hanged, lo, round the
 bilge,
Be off-hewed knolling bloody jowls of Romans !
 Kings, captains, hastily gather of blue Britons,
To place, where halted now is the lord's chariot !
Under swart pine, shelter from mizzling rain ;
His foster-brethren, gently, lo, depose,
Ah, dying, Togodumnos, from their arms !
Search the king's hurt, then, leeches of the druids.
 Hark, speaks, with thin small voice, the passing
 sire,
Commanding his lords, lead, (and all give ear !)
At rising moon, the army, to main forest,
Where lodged, they should await king Caradoc ;
Who cometh on, with main power, of all East March :
Till when, he chargeth, that were hid his death.
Bury him, where he shall de cease, to-night.

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He prays Cunobelin's gods ; gone forth, his spirit
Might enter body of loved Caratacus !
Moreo'er the king forbids, were made inquest,
What Briton's shaft is cause now of his death ;
(For, from the hindward, had been loost that shot.)
Then looking on them all, and known each one,
The martial king, with constant and mild face,
Pluckt forth the arrow ; and his high hand, it brake !
All mourn, and seemed the divine night more dark ;
When vomiting swart blood, the sire fell forth.
A cry, went up, The lord in Morag's arms,
Is now deceased ! and hastily are brought brands.

When the lord's fosters saw, their lord is dead ;
Those valorous cast them down ; they wallow and
howl !

On the wet mould, and all distain their harness.
Sith, doffed their helms, and drawn out long bright
glaives,
They would have slain themselves : but withhold
druids
Their hands, crying ; Lives, in Caradoc, Togo-
dumnos !

Kings, captains, lords, in twilight and the rain,
And straitness of the time, delve, with their spears,

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Opening earth's womb, like midnight murderers !
They measure, by the dead lord, a wild grave.

His breastplate lords undight, and laid apart ;
That golden belt their hands sith loosed, wherewith
He girded, warlord, was : and gazing on
Him, in death-sleep, they say ; When shall be seen
Thy like, again, ah, martial Togodumnos !
With bowed head ; like as father, for his son,
Gone down, ere-time, before him, to the tomb,
Mourns sire Manannan, for Cunobelin's son.
Then, stooping low, his marble front he kissed :
This do they all ; and touch his mighty hand,
Now cold. Last, reverent, lifted the lord's corse,
In royal weed, all harnessed as he was,
Nor washed his sacred blood, kings lay in grave.

On the lord's breast, they laid, then, in dim
grove,
That glorious conquered eagle of a legion !
(The ninth *Hispaniensis* ;) and thereon,
The lord's dead mighty hands did Morag fold.

Sighed sire Manannan, who, in countenance, mongst
Those kings, one seems of the long-living gods.
Nor was there noble Briton, young or old ;
But from his eyelids, all unwont to weep,
Stilled boiling drops, on Togodumnos' corse.

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Spake druids ; Like as the sun, this glory of
Britain

Died ; but doth rise, again, in Caradoc !

That shaft, (so bade the lord, before he passed,)
Manannan casts in, with averted face,
That none inquest were made, who loost the shot,
After his death. Nigh to the digged grave pit,
With the king's fosters, stand those royal steeds ;
And drooping are their battle-stained white crests ;
As they did weep, with men, his timeless death ;
Whose plenteous hand them, of the purged white grain,
Wont daily feed ; whose noble pastime was,
Combed their long manes, to stain them with war-
woad,

And broider in oft tress ; whose great loved voice,
Them, in the course, enflamed to utmost flight,
To draw, neath yoke-tree, silver-dight, his cart,
Before the most renowned swift-teamed war-chariots.

But seen the beacon-flames, of Caradoc's march,
Shine yet far-off ; kings, at Manannan's voice,
With trembling hands, cast mould : and now they
close

The warlord martial Togodumnos' grave !

O'ersmoothed that little mounded pit of earth,
Which holds the glory of great Cunobelin's house ;

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Princes blaze privy marks, on the nigh trees ;
And number steps, to know again this place !
That might, when victory shall have given them gods,
In Roman war, here, his high funerals,
Set forth ; bē honoured, with great solemn feast.
Nathless dark dread encumbers those lords' breasts ;
That, from this day, should fortune of the war,
Go backward. Brake then groan, from generous
Vast chest, shut up, within his iron harness,
Of stern Segontorix, and he cursed Vigantios !
Who, erst of Britons, fled before strange Romans.

Dukes, at moonrise, remove ; and their caterfs,
That were unknown, trampled of many feet,
The mould, where he is laid, to forest lead ;
(So bade the dead,) over the warlord's grave !

As for the Romans, in their four-square *vallum*,
Glimmer a thousand watchfires, in the rain ;
And full their *castrum* is of wounded men.
In the dim night-watch, Aulus sends out scouts :
Which heard much voice, and noise of creaking wains ;
Return with word, the Britons' host remove.

Breaks day, when Britons enter the main forest ;
Where, kindling fires, they dry their rain-steeped
weed :

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So weary lodge, and cure their battle-wounds ;
And men, long fasting, somewhat broil and eat.

High noon was, when arrived, with the East-men,
Whom Antethrigus leads, and Trinobants,
Caratacus, Cunobelin's other son :
Ah, heavy he is, to death ; who now, by swift
Sent messengers, heard, in march, his brother's death.
Men marvel, which behold his godlike countenance,
Shining, through damps of sorrow ; as the sun
Ascends, from clouds ! The chief estates touch
Caradoc's

Glaive : and sith reverent, taking, by the hand,
Him all salute, in room, of Togodumnos,
WARLORD ! Kings gird him, with the golden belt.

Caradoc beheld, full-fledged of shafts and darts,
The targe, leaned in chief place, of Togodumnos !
And, in an oak, hanged hauberk of Manannan,
Was on the warlord slain : nor, yet, is washed,
From his death-blood ! as in that forest place.
And hastily turned the lord away his face,
For his exceeding smart ; so gate him forth,
Alone, to wood to weep. Nor came, again,
Till eve, (when kings have supped,) Caratacus.

He entered, to their watch-light, where they sit ;

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His lords sees, fell-eyed ! twixt whom, stirred debate
Have hellish hags, with firebrands, in their hands ;
Catha and Macha, carrion-hopping fiends ;
Which troubled have blue Britons' camps, to-night.
Manannan seeks, with wisdom and mild voice ;
And king Duneda, (who arrived, to-night,)
With old war-tales, appease their stormy mood.

Of that king-slaying arrow, was their strife :
Fledged with what fowl's wing, nocked was, in what
sort,

Ashen, or birch, the stele, or river reed ;
Of bronze or bone, or subtle flint, the head.
Some mean, that shaft's wing-feathers were of swan,
Whereout his tribe were known, who loost the shot ;
Dweller by Thames. They cease, seen Caradoc,
In reverence of the warlord's mourning looks !

Spies, with the legions, have renounced to Aulus,
(Unto whom, by covert night, traitorous Vigantios
Is passed !) that Britons lodged, in yonder forest.
Sith, was, by counsel of the same Vigantios,
That Romans marched forth, to assail Calleva.

Buried their slain, in the next sun, have Romans :
But Britons' dead lie out yet, in day's heat,
(And over them another dew is passed,)

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A ravens' feast of swollen carcases.
Erst when are Roman legions journeyed forth,
Send mourning Britons back to slaughter-field ;
Where, ah, on swollen bodies, hopping rife,
In fen of rotten blood of men and steeds,
Flock the corpse-fowl, that beat, mongst broken carts,
Their filthy wings, on dead brows of blue warriors,
Despoiled of ornaments and of seemly weed !
They labouring, till murk night, opened long dykes,
Bury, with pious hands, the woad-stained dead.
Sith washed, at a brook-side, from funerals,
Tending pure hands, to heaven, Britons curse Romans !

Caratacus continues in that forest,
Yet other days. Forbade divining druids,
Which signs read, in the bowels of sacrifices ;
He issue, with caterfs, against the legions.

Lo, weary, at morrow, fugitives be come in,
To Britons' camps ! Are men with ghastful looks ;
As who have seen some gods ! whose tunics rent,
Stained, (wounded they,) with war-blood. Erst found
booth,
In green-wood camp, of king Segontorix,
Those cry out ; Taken was, lord, by sudden
assault,

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Calleva ; they only escaped, when slaughter, made,
There, legion-soldiers. Cometh then Guledig forth !
With immense dool, his mighty heart oppressed :
As when some king returned, from foreign wars,
Beholds his hall burned ! and his fair fields wasted,
Are reft his cattle ; and led away, for thralls,
Hears, sons and daughters, wives and little ones.

 In cart the warlord mounts ; whose trumpet
 note,
Doth signify, Take arms, and, from the forest,
March forth ! Journey, come down into the plain,
Caterfs, where he them leads. By Caradoc, drives
Bodvocos, silent ; seen how burned have Romans,
His marches ! wherein whilom multitude was,
Of sheep-flocks, beves and steeds and happy wights.
Drives on, before him, swart Segontorix ;
Who mourns Calleva : and he bears loosely in hand,
His whip and reins ; nor cheers his stumbling
 steeds.

 And, with his captains, which their long-maned
 teams
Guide, nigh to his, communing, Caradoc quoth ;
Our fathers' fathers overthrew old Romans ;
And their eldfathers' sires had burned proud
 Rome !

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So we, helped of strong gods, shall drive
from Britain,
As Cassiobellan, Rome's invading legions.
Is hardly a man, in our days, in great
Rome,
Of stature seen: but full of wicked life,
Be all their marble city's stinking streets:
Wherein go thronging flatterers, ill-faced
routs,
Like to that sallow flood, which parts Rome
town,
And few of honest mind. And who great
lords,
In strange lascivious banquetings, wont to
pass,
Flower-crowned, on beds, with women's soft-
ness, laid,
Mongst curious meats and wine, in precious
cups,
And vomitings, which should renew their
lust,
And pipes and dance, the watches of the
night.
That shallow glebe, which lies beyond
walled Rome,

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Of thralls, is tilled ; for wars have nigh consumed,
Through all Italia, their ingenuous youth.
And their most soil, (which shelves, of
hoarded earth,
On builded walls,) with only vines they plant.
Whose hot earth-blood, the cruel Romans
drink,
And thirst then gore. And this doth make
them mad,
To wars, wherein they hope spoil all the
world.

When, to earth's brow, the Westing sun dismounts,
Who foremost ride, see legions' hill-set camp ;
Whence hastily issued, lo, tall Gaulish horse,
With them, contend. But scythe-carts of Bodvocos,
Some killed, pursue the rest, to their paled *vallum*.
Over against them, lodged then Caradoc,
In a strong place ; and sheep, to the caterfs,
Divides ; sith visits them, from hearth to hearth.

Night fallen, sits swart Segontorix, on dull earth.
Is his dark thought, within his warlike breast,
How venge him, for Calleva burned and wasted,
With some new bloody overthrow of Romans.

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He, of Atrebats, assembles two caterfs,
Midst the dim watch ; and bound, with hasty oath,
Not turn their backs. Then, barefoot, they pass forth.

Yet undescried, like night-wolves, they o'erleapt
The Romans' dyke, pluck down the sharp pale-work ;
In what part, (heard mules' voice,) they deemed the
captive

Lie of Calleva, amidst the legions' carriage.
In a strange street, they light, of leathern tents ;
Mongst smouldering fires of drowsy Roman soldiers.
Then coursed those Atrebats, to further bank ;
Whence they, not having turned their backs, break forth ;
Leaving much dread, (few slain,) to wakening Romans !

Was day now rising, over Britain's woods,
When Aulus glittering cohorts, from all ports,
Sends forth, at once ; and, in long triple ranks,
Erects : and to the soldiers, where he rides,
Are only, in their first onset, dread, he cries,
Britons, like Gauls ; whose vain inconstant
minds,
Loose-tempered bodies, languish soon in wars.
Fear not their uncouth voice, nor rattling
chariots.

Moreo'er, he hears, the Britons' king, fell, slain.

Thus he : but, on the part of glast-stained Britons,

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Leapt, like a god, warlord Caratacus,
To scythe-cart. Captains, with great noise of war-
horns,

Lead forth, already, their glast-stained caterfs.
Calling Cunobelin's son, each warlike nation,
By name ; the lord records their fathers' deeds :
And spake, How, each day, should the Britons' army
Augment ; but by your glaives must daily
Romans

Decay. Stands Caradoc, in that winged white war-
cart,

Of Togodumnos : which now Romans viewing,
Marvel see Britons' king, returned from death !
Save, in the shoulders, seems this more, though less
Of stature. And leap three great alan hounds,
On, baying, before his sheen rushing chariot.

Twixt caterf and caterf, king Caradoc war-carts,
Stations ; and light-armed runners, that hurl javelins.
Glitters the Romans' front, with arms and harness,
Like burning wood : long-heavy-shielded Britons
Stand, naked ranks, against them, blue caterfs.

Eftsoon, with Camog and Morfran, break forth
That leaf-crowned household, armed, of Togodumnos ;
Which vow them, to fight on, to glorious death ;
Or else, till they have slain, for Togodumnos,

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Some Romans' duke. Men, in the vaward, run,
To-day, lo, with them, of Segontorix !
That lord shows, driving in his well-teamed scythe-
cart,

To Britons, with his spear, where smokes Calleva !

Sternly, with sharp-set looks, each dying man
His weapon strains : bears bright skean many an one,
Twixt grinning teeth, to cope with plate-clad Romans,
To death. Hurled back with spears, erst, legions'
ranks ;

Their fierce hands rent, despising wounds and death,
The soldiers' shields aside ; and stab their throats.

Segontorix, who now Romans' battles pierced,
On their reliefs, falls. Those, to-day, were cohorts
Of Flavius' legion. There, amidst the carriage,
And droves and captives, was great duke Vespasian
Compassed in, by that nephew of old Commius,
Horrid with barbared arms and shout and force !

But nothing he dismayed, his buckler cast,
Drawn his sharp glaive, before his martial breast ;
And from his saddle, him smiteth round about :
Howbeit gan pluck him, Belges, from his horse.
And there, of Britons, had been slain great Flavius ;
Were not that gods and FORTUNE of great Rome,
Sent his son TITUS ; who turned, in that point,

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From fight, on the left wing, midst Sabine's horse.
He mainly rides, with Gaulish centuries,
And levelled spears, on those blue Britons' backs.
Soldiers, on foot, with their sharp stabbing glaives
And stiff shield-spikes, contend to save the duke.
Belges, albe they trampled of Gauls' horse,
That on them run ; still, with victorious glaives,
And darts, yield, crying Calleva ! Togodumnos !
No ground : but fight on, till their worthy deaths.

Last, hardly Flavius, cumbered on the grass,
Fallen from his spear-gored horse, with strong effort,
Of Titus and of Roman knights and soldiers,
Was saved. Segontorix, whom there none could
pierce ;
And those with him, from that great hazard, pass :
Their sharp spears stilling blood, of Roman deaths.

Other caterfs run, of cerulean Britons,
Fast down from hills, new nations that arrive !
At whose view, prudent Aulus commands, blow
Repair : withdraws, then, fenced by Sabine's horse ;
Nor yet is midday, his unshaken legions.

Who come, strange island people, to the war ;
Men bearded, bearing moon-bent shields, unlike,
Of a dark speech, to other Britons, are

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Belerions, workers in the tinny mines
Of Penrhyn Gnawd, which Bloody Foreland named.
Decet, their king, upleads them, now, in arms.

Caradoc his chariots sends, then, trouble Romans.
Sith, at his word, caterfs, dig and cast bank,
In circuit large ; and fence, with pales around,
In Roman wise, their camps. But scorn Belerions,
To lodge, in field, within a wall of sods ;
Saying, that such were fit, on some hill-bent,
To pinfold sheep ; Belerions fear no wolf.
Let fence them Romans, in a land not theirs.

Twixt eve, and fall then of short Summer night,
Silures, from past Hafren flood, arrive.
War-renowned sire, Moelmabon, leads their powers ;
And his stout sons. With them march Demetans,
Their neighbours, herdsmen of West-hills. Of broc,
Or wild buck's hammered hide, is their war-weed,
Which stripe of shaft nor dart may lightly pierce.
Great-statured Idhig, is their valorous duke.

When erst shines dawn, on night-steeped earth's
dull face ;
The prætor, looking from his wall, discerns
The Britons' bank ; and how now seems increased
Their barbare host. He deemed then good his soldiers
Contain, this morrow, in their four-square *vallum*.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Nor yet day's white-horsed, swift-wheeled, chariot
Was run forth, from the secret of the gods ;
When swart Belerions, on blue Britons' part,
Known, by their horned moon-shields, in four caterfs,
Go up, with shout, sheen thickets of tall spears.
Silures and tall Demetans, from their camps,
Come forth, on whom falls fury of the war-god,
Caterfs in arms ; and, with swift foot, they pass.

Approaching, those disdain the Roman *vallum* ;
That should, digged earthen bank, their foes enclose :
And, o'er that wall, they hurl their scornful spears.
Caratacus, yonder, leads out his blue army :
And with the lord-of-war, come flocking scythe-
carts.

They dwell then, till the sun looks from high
heaven ;
Waiting, that issue Romans from their gates.
Some taste meat, other drowse upon their arms,
Lain down, to slumber, in their enemies' sight,
On the fresh grass. Now, after this, approach,
From East field, lo, new host, men guised as Almain :
And, helm-clad ! other bands, beside those, march.
And who them leads, tall, riding on white horse,
A war-god seems. It is the ethling Thorolf !
(Known, by his white-horse targe, and raven crest,) .

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Illustrious seed of Brennus. Lately he passed
With long war-keels, East seas, from Albis' mouth :
Britons' caterfs him hail, with long loud shout !

Warned, by the rowers of the Redmare ship,
Proclaimed, this second year, through Estian march,
King Wittig hath, (wherein a people of Brennus,
Wonne,) all who follow would, o'er seas, his son,
In arms to Bret-land, there to fight with Romans,
Assemble to Elbe-haven. Were they, this moon,
Thence, twice, outsailed, in thirty long row-keels.
Who foremost march come, marvel to relate !
Almains to Britain, bearing Roman arms.

Is harness drawn from forest's sacred boughs ;
Spoils, which their glorious sires, of vanquished legions,
Uphanged, yore, to their strong Cheruscan gods.

Noble companion, Wittig, of ERMINIUS,
Was ; who his land's youth, leading against Romans,
In the last age, o'erthrew their consul Varus ;
What day, of thirty-thousand Roman soldiers,
Out-marched from *castra*, thirty-score, uneath ;
Which, gladly, gave their hands to bonds, 'scaped
death.

That wood was a vast dying place of Romans !
Whose off-hewed heads, in all tall pines, nailed Almains :
Till none more found were trees, in Teutberg forest,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Whereon to hang the hated Roman face.
Wolves, those days, (which the wild roes wont to hunt,)
Did surfeit flesh, and vomit gore of soldiers.
Jowls of Rome's dukes, with pitch-daubed visages,
And gilded teeth, were, longtime, hanging seen,
With shields of captains, in rune-graven porch,
Of fierce Tanfana, goddess of that march :
Whose forest earth with men's bones, so wide round,
Was strewed, that seemed there heavens had rained
chalk stones!

Too strait those spoils, for the great-statured Almaines,
They were of them despised, and of their sons ;
Till lately Thorolf warned was of Velede,
With their own weapons to contend with
Romans!

Then sent king Wittig, and were taken down
Morions and breastplates, for a thousand men ;
Which Weyland's sons enlarged, with inset tongues,
Of hammered bronze, to Almaines' just assize.

Halt, yonder, Almaines, leaning on long spears.
Then, towards blue Britons' host, comes, barefoot,
Thorolf,

(Token of mourning heart, for Togodumnos ;)
And lords, with him, to hail Caratacus.

Thorolf, with Caradoc, mounts then battle-cart ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And joys, before thick blue caterfs, to ride ;
And ordinance view of Britain's warlike tribes,
And Romans' *vallum*, in this land of Brennus.
Sith powdered, as he was arrived from march,
With angry and great heart, for Togodumnos ;
The ethling Thorolf, twixt the hostile armies,
Proceeds to the mid-space. Hark, with great voice,
The Saxon hero proffers him to fight,
To-day, with Romans, many as this right hand
Hath fingers, which, before him, he upholds !
So come they on, by two, by three, at once ;
And were those dukes, as he a prince of Almain.

Thorolf's warfolk gin, with hoarse insolent throat,
Chant of Rome burning, and great Heremod !
How show their heads then, bove the soldiers' work,
Men of a kindred speech, Batavians !
And, likewise, they, (though blow forth Roman clarions !)
Kindling their hearts, chant lays of Heremod !

Anon, the generous sons of Moelmabon,
A shield-wall made, before the ethling's breast.
Are those tall Cerix, Ferriog, Maglos, Merion ;
That stand, to fence him, with their stoutest champions.
Hark ! mongst tall Britons, Thorolf's Elbe-land
Almain,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

With boisterous words, revile those wall-pent Romans !
(Foemen, which overlook an high-paled *vallum* ;)
Calling them, women ! for their shaveling faces.

Then certain Roman Gauls have asked of Aulus,
He suffer, they might, from the *castrum* port,
Go forth, chastise those insolent barbary throats.
And Aulus easily grants. Should such, to soldiers,
Which look on, be a jocund spectacle ;
Without effusion of the blood of Rome.

Mongst the allies, which proffered them to fight ;
Praising their forwardness, choose his tribunes out,
Four hundred of the more robust : those pass
Then *dextra*-port, harnessed and armed as Romans !
Uneath three hundred Britons them await ;
With hardly four-score Almaines. Issued Gauls
Without ; they ranged them, in four bands. For
ensigns,

Those horsemen's spears advance ; whereon they bound
Have wisps of halm. Each holds, in his shield hand,
Two javelins. Certain tall centurion horseman,
Is chosen captain of their centuries ; one
Bassus, adorned with many martial ornaments !

Bassus, in Latin tongue, oration made ;
Wherein he magnifies his faith to Rome.
He warns, use all advantage of the ground ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And skill they learned, in exercise of arms :
Are valiant those with whom they shall contend.

Of Britons' part, kings look on, from their war-carts :
Sit blue caterfs down, armed, in the long grass,
To watch the fight. Already, their strong champions,
Moelmabon's sons have ordered, in three bands.

Thorolf stands, before his great-statured Almain ;
(Of whom is none, that durst not thrust, alone,
Mongst hostile ranks ; nor blench his hardy face !)
His helm, inlaid with gold, of hammered bronze :
A boar's head is, with long gilt tusks, the crest ;
Whose bristles gold. And he embraces targe,
Shines like the moon, that of Erminius was :
That hero, (in change of hospitable gifts,)
It gave to Wittig ; whose light willow-wood
The hand, with wondrous skill, had overlaid,
Of Weyland, Saxon smith, with plate of gold,
And circuits of hard tin. Hangs Marvor, glaive,
In Thorolf's baldric, dight with coral studs,
The chain is gold, the haft of a whale's tooth :
(It Arthemail bare, men say, Rome's-bane, to Almaine.)
This now he draws, conscious of thousand deaths !

Of the ethling's champions, few ben armed as
Romans.

The most, for war-shirts, hammered hides gird-on,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Of elk, or bull: flint-stiff, with old war-gore,
Are many; of Wittig's, Elbe-land's, enemies.
An angry Gaul first hurled, against prince Maglos,
His dart: but he, protending his broad targe,
It bet back, on his foeman rushed with glaive,
Eager, in all men's sight, his life to reave.
Him deadly he smote, upon the brazen pan,
And cleft to chin; and fell the Roman cold.
And like as, in some bush, child, having found
Fowl's nest, it casts; and broken lie the eggs:
So brain and morion poured were on the grass,
Of this first slain, crude sight to Roman soldiers!
That look down from their wall: but, contrarywise,
Exult the glast-stained Britons. Hark, new shout!
For Maglos brake his glaive: yet, naught amazed,
The prince, stooped, wild crag-stone from field, up-
lifted;
It hurled gainst that chief captain of Gaul-Romans;
Who runneth in, with bright horseman's embowed
glaive,
To slay him. On the sharp brim, of his targe,
The brute-mass pight: which, by that vehement
stroke,
Back-buffed on his neck and his large breast,
The weasand, bruised, and, (wonder to be told!)

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

That sharp edge severed. Spouting his life's blood,
Fell forth the dying Roman, on his face.
Exulting, Maglos spoiled, (fenced by strong warriors,)
Bassus, of harness, arms and ornaments :
His head off-hewed ; then backward hurled, to Britons !
That, risen, make game, to spurn it, with swift
feet ;

Whereat laughed loud swart lord Segontorix ;
That was not seen, sith Romans burned Calleva,
To smile. Had Thorolf leapt, with fearful shout,
Gainst Romish Gauls. His left hand took an ensign ;
His right arm slew, thereat, a stout centurion.
Can none withstand the ethling's immense force !
Whose giant members fenced with scaly bronze.
As pirate prow, he wades war's bloody waves ;
Pursues, like Woden ; bloody harvest reaps,
His arm, resistless ; men, as saplings were,
Hews down to death, and rolls them in their gore.

Cerix and Maglos, Ferriog and stout Merion,
Have, with their warriors, well-nigh overthrown
All who opposed them. Cerix' heel, mishapped,
In gore, then, slide ; and he, of his own glaive,
Was wounded in his fall. Turned, at his cry,
Ferriog and Merion ; and they run, to break
Much press of foes, which him now round invade :

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

But in that, each, in his unshielded flank,
Was pierced, of dart, which thick on them were
shot.

Is this thrilled through the bladder and the loins ;
Where quickly mortal is the bitter stroke :
Through shoulder he, to nipple of his breast.
Groaning, they fell ; before their foremost warriors :
Which seen of Thorolf, he, with immane force,
And brunt of Almain shields, hurls back the fight,
And saved Moelmabon's sons ; that were their corsers
Not spoiled. Take up who noblest of his warriors,
Each prince, fainting to death, on his long targe.

Gainst plate-clad, valorous, Roman-Gaulish soldiers ;
Thus naked Britons, and light-harnessed Almain
Fight : nor prince Maglos yet his germains' deaths,
Heard. He contending, boldly, far in front,
Gauls slays and chaces, to their Roman work.

Hark, lamentable cry, that thrills all ears !
Of an old wight, hath seen his children dead.
Is Moelmabon's royal fatherhood.
Though purblind, he his sons sees, borne back, slain.
He wallows on the ground ; and his two hands,
With swart-snatcht dust, defile his reverend hairs.
His cry made cold, that hear, even Roman hearts.

Are Gauls put to the worse ; for may none stand,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Before the brand of Thorolf ; or the swift
God-given, to-day, great force of Briton Maglos !
Then other leapt down, from the pale-set *vallum* ;
Romans, that hastily armed them, run in harness,
Gainst long-haired Britons, and their fellow Almaines ;
And likely had, eftsoon, sallied the two armies,
To battle, in the field ; but Aulus' clarions,
(Heard, beyond hills, rebellowing sound of trumpets,
And confuse shouting,) Gauls recall to *castrum*.
Those, cast their hollow shields, behind their backs,
On every side, now, fly, towards Roman *vallum*.
Britons, with dreadful yells, pursue and smite
The hindmost. That day's cohorts of the watch,
Receive the fugitives, at their *castrum* port.

Sith, climbed some, in tall poplar-trees, of Britons,
Behold from river-lea, where men like Romans,
Flee scattered, before chariots. Sent out Aulus,
When Britons slumbering, (time of midday heat,)
His mules and waterers, from the hinder port.
But there had laid Heroidel, of Kent's scythe-carts,
An ambush : rushing now, from fenny brakes,
Those slay unwarlike wights and turn to flight.

Fierce Atrebat have sworn, again, to course
The legions' camps, to-night : but, with the dukes,
The Guledig is ; who, for the princes slain,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Moelmabon's sons, make funeral sacrifices :
Yet, ere he parted, gave them one, Segontorix,
For captain, (who fights, with him, in his chariot,)
Young Madron. Poised, then, upright, on the grass,
His lance, quoth Madron ; Should their battle-path,
To-night, be, where might, falling, this spear's point,
Show them ! Which proved, with silent foot, they
part.

They o'erleap the *vallum* ; but there, from beneath
The paled work, rise up ready-harnessed soldiers !
And, as who taken is tardy, in wild billows ;
When sudden eager surges on the shore :
Callevans, hemmed of thronging enemies,
Longwhile, might, not the unequal strife endure.
And for they, Belges, would not turn their backs,
Those warriors brake forth, hardly, with much loss.

Soon as the misty morrow gins to clear,
Clamour, with angry heart, to battle, soldiers.
Their forwardness praises, from a bank of sods,
Aulus ; he shows them then the need of corn ;
How they must march, to conquer some new dune.
Though Britons, now, in field, be a great
army ;
Mongst them, as wont with Gauls, soon,
likely is,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Shall spring dissensions, and to factions
grow.

So furious in beginning, shall these, then,
Lose heat ; and that ere the cerulean hew,
Wherewith those stained have their pale
bodies, fade.

As they wend forth, from council, Briton trumps
Salute the sun, with grave and dreadful note !

Chided this Summer night, Caratacus,
Impatient for the sons of Moelmabon ;
Till he, on Romans, wreak their timeless deaths.
And Almain ethling Thorolf takes no rest,
So woodness kindles his great heart, gainst Romans.
Maglos sleeps, battle-weary ; but all night,
He, in slumber, groaning, called the names, and
wept,
Of his dear germains, went beneath the earth.
And Cerix, wounded, though he may not wake,
For drowsy herbs, which leech steeped in his drink ;
Much wallows still, and winds, in troubled sleep ;
Like red-hot iron, in tongs of cunning smith :
And when him new day wakes, he wakes to weep.

The sun uprisen, in wide field, now, are seen,
Wide-ranged, the naked Britons' blue caterfs.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

The long-haired island king, in his white war-cart,
Rides visit the tribes' battles. Loud, great Caradoc
Cries; No man dear, to-day, account his
life!

As bird, loost from the hand, shall each soul
mount,
From his cast flesh, to star-hall of the
gods.

And promised, with main voice, Caratacus;
Who fall in fight, their children should not
want.

Avenge they now, in field, king Togodumnos!

All shout and smite, again, the glast-stained Britons;
Bright arms, to bulls'-hide-dight long wicker shields.

Thorolf cries, in their speech, to battailed Almaines,
Riding on white war-steed; Are those the
Romans,

Whom oft, both sides the Rhine, our fathers
slew!

But could not Maglos speak: he silent looks,
To gods in skies, (else his stout heart must break;)
Unto whom he vows a nation's sacrifice.

Was heard Segontorix shouting to his men!

Who, duke, leads up Icenian thick caterfs;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And seems his four-square targe a tower of brass,
Is Antethrigus. Next enanged to his,
Are the thick spears of merchant Troynovant.
Marunus, Cadern's son, is their bold captain.

Who midst moon-shielded swart Belerions rides,
Is Decet ; stand then battailed Demetans.
But Catuvelaunians, Britain's royal tribe,
Thick spears, blue-shielded ranks, the middle hold :
Beyond whom, Dobuni, that Bodvocos leads ;
And Trinobants, which neighbour Troynovant.
On the two horns, are Maglos' stern Silures,
And light-armed power of Kent, and squadroned
scythe-carts.

Blue Britons, seen, that come not yet the legions,
Sit down on the green herb ; and battle-songs
Loud chant, from tribe to tribe, which made Car-
vilios.

And now hot noon, sit Britons, negligent ;
But Thorolf risen, impatient, after meat,
Lo, shining bands, his warmen of the Elbe,
Upleads. Now passed mid-space, a wall of shields,
The *castra* they approach. Then sound out clarions !
And issue, harnessed, from all ports, at once,
The shining legions. Caradoc leaps, anon,
And every Briton captain, to his scythe-cart.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

As cornfields, hurtled of new-breathing wind,
Rise up the woad-stained tribes, in their caterfs.

Like glittering immense flood, of storm, borne forth,
Rolling great billows, poise of Roman legions
Hath first invaded thick-speared bands of Almainns.
But they, well covered of their hide-dight shields ;
Break, like fast rocks, and cast those waves, aside,
In bloody spume. To succour Almainns, scythe-carts
Outrush ; join battle blue caterfs with cohorts.
The heavens rebellow infinite battle-noise !

Strenuous, fulfilled of ire, the soldiers fight ;
That hope win cattle, and prey of slaves and corn.
Is first the woad-stained host, tumultuous,
Of Britons broken ; then, they repulse Romans.

Valorous Bodvocos, leading thick caterfs,
Was parted from them, in much battle-press ;
And closed, with few, in pale of Roman glaives.
Nathless, made fence of bucklers, the king's warriors,
Shouting their gods ! fight, ring-wise, round their
lord.

Men fall, each moment, of them on their arms ;
Till few be left. Then gored, by a shot javelin ;
Fighting, to save his men, the prince waxed faint :
Nor able more his homicide iron to wield,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

He, first of Britons' kings, was taken alive.
Yet hardly and bellowing fierce disdain, like bull,
Which, bound with cords, is haled of many churls.
Nor able valorous Golam was, on whom,
He loudly called ; nor Cadern's son, to save
Their friend ; though both thrust forth, with eager
spears.

Maglos on the left horn, makes head : Silures,
Lifting their woad-stained hands, to the bright heaven,
Have sworn avenge, this day, the royal tomb !
On glittering scythe-wheels, hurls Caratacus,
And seems the flaming god ! To dukes records
He, and blue tribes, their old renown in arms.
He, found Heroidel, bade speed, with Kent's war-carts ;
And from the rearward, where less firm he sees
Their ranks, set suddenly upon the hindmost soldiers.

Wend, without whip or rein, at Caradoc's voice,
His three wing-footed steeds. Do souse, in full
Career, the winds, about the warlord's ears ;
And backward fly the king's long gold-bright hairs.
He sends more scythe-carts out : and his great voice
Heartens, whereso he comes, blue warriors,
To glorious deeds, in all the army's sight ;
Smiting, like threshers of the Autumn corn,
The soldiers' face. He casts far-flying javelins,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

His steeds tread Romans, with their brazen hoofs ;
And with sharp scythe-beam rend, and burning hooks,
And dauntless pikéd breasts, the enemies' flesh.

Yond cometh on Thorolf ; and doth Romans break,
With spear and glaive of his tall Rome-clad Almains !
Are they, when battle-fury on them falls,
Strong leapers in the bloody dance of Woden !
Many have wide wounds ; is seen much swart war-
blood,

Both on their arms, plate-harness and broad shields.
And marvel Romans, seeing barbared Romans !
And in the sun-god's ray, those boil and sweat.

Heard confuse clamour sound, behind the *castrum* ;
Where now great cloud arrived of Cantion chariots.
Again, bids blow repair, the prætor Aulus ;
Deeming new nation of unvanquished Britons,
As in the former days, assailed his legions.
Turning to Britons, evermore, their faces ;
Foot behind foot, and joined over their heads,
Their targets, Romans draw them to their *castrum* ;
Leaving the trampled slaughter-plain, to Britons ;
Wherein lie five glast-stained dead, for one Roman.

With Camog and Morfran, Segontorix,
In twilight of the stars, o'er Roman *vallum*,
Again breaks, silent : and now, rightly, falls

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

The Guledig's glaive. Calleva's captives found ;
(With loss of few, and blood of fearful Romans,)
Segontorix hath them saved, beyond the walls !

Yet quoth the Foster-Muse, I looked and saw,
Fly shapes of demons, under covert skies.
In form of raven, lighted Nemeton,¹
On rocking elder spray ; she, craking dire,
There vomited battle-corse and rotten gore !
Nigh where have kings now supped, under oak-bough ;
And, in their hands, yet hold the silver cups,
Of royal mead, whereof they drinking, (called
'Their names,) made mention of who battle-dead,
And erst of Togodumnos ! and had poured
Drink-offering, to dark gods of underworld.

Those then, anew, one upon other, stare !
Surmising, still, of Togodumnos' death.
Men murmur, as with baleful dreams oppressed.
Nor is Duneda with them, nor Manannan ;
In whose wise breast springs counsel of a god.
But were those now went forth, and Caradoc ;
With Maglos, that, to-day, was, fighting, stained,
With honour of a Roman captain's blood,
To comfort Moelmabon, sire ; who sits,
Mourning, half-blind, alone, in the wide forest.

¹ Or Nemetona ; the same as Nemon.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And none rests, who knows heart-appeasing words ;
Which can men's kindled breasts, (ere they, like coals,
Flame forth, to civil strife,) in one, accord ;
As iron annealed with iron, welds cunning smith.

To rancours of old faction, warped their hearts ;
Some captains blame the conduct of the war.
Then Guledig spake, renowned Segontorix ;
(Incensed by braids, untimely ; like mis-shot,
And venimed, shaft, of friend's hand, that attains
Friend and him wounds ; from lips of Antethrigus ;)
Irreverent word of great Cunobelin's house !
What reck's he more, he hath redeemed his oath.
Risen in fierce heat, he, mongst them, then, goes
forth.

Marunus, Golam, Morag, silent sit.
The generous hearts, in their young warlike breasts ;
Ache, gazing on Bodvocos' empty place !
(Nor helps it, these, mongst elder kings, to speak.)
Decet now slumbers, in the outer camps ;
And Idhig came not, who is slow of speech.
Thorolf went early out, with Almain lords,
Unto whom is tongue of Britons yet uncouth :
And pight his white-horse ensigns, twixt the camps ;
There he, till morrow's light, will wake, in arms.

Last called, to loud strife of unseemly words ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Which bandy dukes, in hearing of the gods,
The Britons' supreme lord, behold, approach !
With Caradoc, comes Moelmabon, mournful sire,
With frozen eyes ; distained whose reverend locks,
With ashes of the hearth ; for his sons' deaths.
Walks, father of good read, divine Manannan,
At the warlord's right hand. Comes, like a god,
Who rides, above the storm, Caratacus.
All who wait on his lofty countenance,
Will his high word obey, when he commands.
Comes, then, Duneda, looking on the ground.
Lifted her raven wings, when they sate down,
Flew forth the fiend ; for soon should rise the sun ;
When (druids ween,) should be night-hag turned to
stone !

And seemed tall Maglos, Belin ; Camulus,
Caratacus ; and high father of the gods,
Moelmabon, as they sit ! Befell, arrived
Then druid ; whom, by the hand, Moelmabon's druids
Lead in, before the watchfires of the kings.
This, messenger of the oracle of some god,
Seems ; who, in his hoar-yellow locks, long plume
Hath bound, of erne ! Is he, a month of days,
Faring, with two companions, come from Mona.
(Are they of Samoth's druids.) With wildered looks,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Spake Airol ; Groans, in the god's temple-cave,
Resounded ; and his priests heard divine voice,
Say, how the former weal and free estate
Of Britons, save all kings, of Samoth's house,
Of one accord now, were, in Roman war,
Must utterly perish ! At Duneda's voice,
Uprisen ; then kings, touch all the warlord's glaive,
And knit right hands, among them. Caradoc, then,
Bade quickly mix the sweet-breathed metheglin ;
Wherein steeped herbs, which able to remove
All heart's mislike, guile, rankling weariness.
He sends, anon, call in some noble bard.

And founden, soon, is Melyn, mongst broad
shields,
Of Verulam : and, bard, leads now a caterf !
To battle armed, he, from the royal cup,
Drinks dulcet mead ; and sith, deposed his targe,
And glaive, on bough, uphanged ; his martial hand
Strook the shrill instrument ; and seem his chords,
To thunder, and to languish and to weep !

He mourns now Britons' dead ; he threats proud
Romans ;
And quickened are, with ire, all Britons' hearts.
He chants, to comfort of king Moelmabon,
Of heroes, which now, mongst high stars, have being.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Who fallen, on wicker shield, is, on his face ;
Against the dawn, flits his immortal breath,
Waked, as from dream of sleep, from the cold corse.

He chants, how Ogma, spokesman of the gods,
This morrow's day ; when great far-journeyed dead
Arrived, from sunless paths of underworld ;
Had called their names aloud, extolled their deeds ;
And, gracious, nodded on them blessed gods ;
And antique heroes took them, by the hand.

When now Moelmabon heard, that mournful sire ;
How came unto star-hall, his fallen ones,
And entered music, in his frozen ears ;
Betwixt his hands, he, bowed his hoary head,
Slumbers, that had not slept, since his sons' deaths !
Prince Maglos, doffed his hair-locks' circling band,
Of gold, them tyres, what time in battle-cart,
He rides ; and to that maker of sweet lays,
(Who joying it received,) it gave in hand.

Then Melyn, touching new stern chord, prepares,
To sing an onset ; and sow in men's ears,
Words, that should seem the voice, in his war-rage,
Of battle-god. He sounds loud piercing note !
Whilst young men armed, in silver cups, bear round
Ambrosial mead. But ere lords might it taste,
Heard blowing warhorns, in the Briton camps !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Upleapt all lords, and snatcht, with troubled hearts,
Their arms ; they, hasten forth, to their caterfs.
Yet was but parting of the Atrebat :
Segontorix, that forsakes Caratacus !
The warlord's runners speed then, through the camps,
To bring him word, of all that falls, to-night.
They find unwearied Thorolf keeps good watch ;
With his tall Almain's' guard, twixt the two armies.

By that defection of Segontorix,
Is weakened the resistance of blue Britons.
Wherefore, when druids, which read the starry hours,
Proclaim, is mid of night, with long loud chant ;
Britons remove, and leave their burning fires.

March the caterfs, and come down to Thames' ford,
The chariots, as Caratacus imposed,
Station in the main stream, to break, above,
The water's force. They, by the full moon passed,
Britons, from thence, ascend to lofty woods.

Where lodged ; come eftsoon kings, to the warlord,
To council : heard, then, read of Moelmabon,
And of Duneda and divine Manannan,
And Dumnoveros ; king Caratacus,
Who, in his mind, it studied, beforehand,
(They say, the like intended Togodumnos !)

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Concluded, to divide his battle-carts,
(Are they three thousand, with him, scythed war-
chariots,)

Into four courses. Two should vex the Romans,
Each other day ; whilst pasture twain their steeds.

To Beichiad, (who base son to king Cunobelin,
Born in his age,) he gives the first to rule.

Stout Rutupiæn Heroidel, most expert
Rector of war-carts, o'er the next, he set.

The king commits, to Brentyn, his third course :
(Was this young lord, a kinsman of the queen.)

To Fythiol he, by read of Antethrigus,
Assigned, (of all East-men, that fight in chariots,)
The fourth course. Much them charged king
Caradoc,

(According to that word of dead Cunobelin ;)
From every vantage ground, kill and cut-off ;
Harry the marching trains, and hem their horse,
From corn and daily pasture of the grass :
Nor Romans suffer, night-time, to take rest ;
But still outwear, with new and new alarms.

Foreriders now arrive, of Ordovices,
Known by a blazoned hammer in their shields.
Their host, horse, archery and thick spears, approach ;
And KYNAN, war-renowned, their king, them leads.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

With kings and captains, mounts Caratacus,
In battle-carts, to meet him, in the path.

Now, when was known, Bodvocos, wounded prince,
Is, mongst the captives, in the legions' *castra* ;
The legate sends Scribonius, cure his wounds,
(Which his own surgeon is.) Ended the war,
This island-king, means Aulus, should adorn
His triumph. But come, to himself, Bodvocos,
Mongst soldiers ! for he would not live, unworth ;
His healing bands did rend, with furious teeth.

The new-born day, wide-shining, from the East,
Behold, from their paled walls, the cohorts' watch,
Void the wide champaign, of cerulean Britons !
Then Aulus horsemen sent, explorers, out.
Towards noon, returned ; those bring him word, they
found

Wains' tract and chariot-wheels, footprints of flocks :
They followed forth, then, Britons' multitude,
To a large stream ; which the enemies have o'erpassed.

When from his guides, (Belges of Cogidubnos,
And false Vigantios ;) Aulus, not far-off,
Hears, *Caer Corinium* ;¹ dune, whose king, is this
Wounded Bodvocos ; where laid also up

¹ Cirencester.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Much victual, whereof present need have soldiers ;
He sounds, that issue from their camps, the legions !

They few leagues marched, see cornfields yellow-
ripe,
Nigh to their path. The legate, with new clarion,
His armed trains halts : then, sends, from every legion,
A cohort, to reap down, with their short glaives,
Bread-corn. Being come, together, to that place,
Deposed their shields and hauberks, Roman soldiers,
Gin crop the jocund ears. Then, with iron noise,
Fall ; suddenly outrushing on them, from nigh wood,
Swift-wheeling chariot-squadrons of blue Britons !
Horrid with scythed beams and wheels' whirling-hooks,
And dreadful yells of noble barbare warriors.
Who stand, to fight, on them, the island youth ;
Outrun, on their scythe-beams, and cast thick javelins !
Nor tussocks let them, stiches, stubs, nor stones,
But their shrill-leaping axetrees all o'er-ride.
Some leapt-down ; even join battle, in the plain.
Under their wheels, rumbles the clodded glebe.
Being taken unready, helmless Roman soldiers
Blue Britons' onset might sustain, uneath :
Yet globed them round, who their most strenuous
ones,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Romans, with glaives, (few of them have snatcht
shields,)

Resist, with the Italic fortitude.

The dreadful justling war-carts now passed forth ;
Return, anew, on them, with whirling hooks !
Their teams all of a foam, and crackling whips ;
And glorious cries of Britain's charioteers !
Britons' shrill raging wheels now hold, in chace,
(Which Aulus sent in aid,) the Gaulish horse.
Fast flying, through the plain, those frightened steeds,
Maugré their heads, their cumbered riders cast.

Then borne away, alive, were knights and soldiers ;
Tending their suppliant hands, to men and gods !
Captives, to druids' dreadful sacrifices.
Seen this new case, which happened in a moment,
Aulus, himself, a legion's eagle snatched.
Him cohorts follow fast, in sounding harness ;
Not otherwise than who his fellow seeing,
Fallen in some mischief, runs on his winged feet ;
Nor recks put, in adventure, his own life ;
Might only he save that other, from dark death !
Their knees leap to their breasts, on the green grass.

Over-against those, issue from hill-grove,
New cloud of war-carts. O'er stone, over bush
Jump their sheen war-wheels. Captain of East-men,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Icenian Fythiol guides ; whilst the first squadron,
O'er whom young Brentyn rules, withholds apart,
To blow their sweating steeds. Sith, all the Britons,
Hurl, freshly yelling, on the approaching legions !

Then grievous were the maims of trampled soldiers ;
Rushing, with generous brunt, of their piked breasts,
The island steeds. Is any thrilled of dart ;
To grass leapt, sever, with sharp belt-knives, drivers,
His leathern bands ; and, mostwhiles, saved their
cart,

They issue, harmless, with an horse's loss.

Last, Britons draw to wood, with panting steeds !

More heedful, henceforth, is the cohorts' march.
And when their trains, to an hill's bent, gainst eve,
Gin first, where some fresh fleeting brook, arrive ;
And there green meadows, pasture for the horse,
The clarion sounds ! three times, to measure camp ;
Whence was not, till the fifth day, that now legions
Approach, to Caer Corinium of Mid-Britons.

Then, when rekindled was the sacred ray,
Behind them, in the East : whilst Romans march ;
Their scouts, (light horse,) entangled all the paths,
Report, beyond, widewhere, with woven wood !
Custom of Britons, in their island wars.

In that, assailed them Beichiad's rushing chariots.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Fall many, in the long glittering trains: sound
trumpets,

To halt ! Then, hastily, the more valiant soldiers,
Them ordering, pierce, with darts, the Britons' steeds ;
That issued from all rule, and mad with smart,
Yerking, with brazen hooves, bring all to naught.

Repulsed those Britons, Romans now, in forest,
Enter, beyond which, say their Belges' guides,
Lies Caer Corinium. They see great felled trees ;
All wattled whose green boughs, like nightmare
dream ;

Where weary way, under their knitted shields,
Must open, with their glaives, Italic soldiers.
Lurk ambushed wights, in every thicket grove.
Them labouring, thus, the sun, at afternoon,
Already, in forest darkness, seems go down.

The Roman cumbered cohorts, next day, pass
The Churne. And, lo, nigh-hand, that Britons' dune,
Fenced with pale-work, upon a bank of earth.
Halts Aulus, and commands, that all take meat :
They rest an hour. Romans upholding, sith,
Round knitted shields, over their bronze-helmed heads,
Assail the Britons' bulwark. Drag down soldiers,
Impatient, with long grapples, stones and earth :
Though hail out on them be, of sling-stones, shot ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And flights of bitter shafts, and sharp-ground darts ;
And ruin, of down-húrléd beams, doth oppress,
Whole ranks, at once. Viewed this destruction, Aulus,
With clarion's voice, recalls his legionaries.

He, sith, commands, that captive king, bring forth ;
And set within the danger of their shot,
Which look down from the wall. Dobuni cry out !
That see their lord bound and entreated thus.
They stretcht their palms to him, lament and weep.

Aulus, through an interpreter, proclaims ;
And they, to Cæsar, yield them, and pay ransom,
They should have their lives saved ; and will the
Romans

Their king restore them, to be under tribute :
Else soldiers, in their view, for Romans slain,
This king will kill ! Forbids, by sign, Bodvocos,
And royal shout ; to all, to yield his dune !

Is clamour heard, on further part, anon.
Hath, son of Flavius, young deed-daring Titus,
There, (scaled the bulwark,) broken in, with his
cohort ;
Where waited none defenders for the Romans.
Those leapt-down, in the dune, soon overrun
Few herding folk and old palled wights ; for all

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

The hardy strength of Dobuni is in field,
Caterfs and ensigns, with Caratacus.

Titus, made slaughter, in their market place ;
Shouts, mainly, to nigh bronze-clad legionaries !
They throng in to him. Thus Corinium taken
Is, in a moment ! Wherein prey find Romans,
And victual, more than ere was in Calleva.
All old and impotent folk, slay, angry soldiers ;
Pill, at their list, and bind for thralls, till eve ;
Nor heed then voice of clarions ! to repair.
They blood-stained lodge and eat, in Britons' bowers.

But entered in the dune ; set guard, the legate,
Of knights of Rome, for he, this night-time, fears
Might aught mishappen his seditious soldiers.
When, in Bodvocos' hall, to sup, sits Aulus,
Loud-rattling thunder shakes the dimnéd world :
Soldiers, that drunken lie of metheglin,
Do think they voices hear, of Britons' gods.

In this night-wrath of heaven, and the thick rain,
And lightnings serpentine, of prince Beichiad's men,
Certain, climbed covertly, have entered in the dune ;
With fierce hearts burning, in their bodies cold.
Mounting, afoot, those vowed gifts, to war-gods,
And might they achieve some hardy deed on Romans !
Some having, neath their cloaks, hid fire in pots, .

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Kindle house-eaves ; whereas they now grope forth.
Whence, soon, vast flames are raised, of the wind-god !
Like spotted wasps, that men burn, in their nests,
Under the clod, with sulphur fume, by night ;
Then perished many lives of legionaries.
Even Britons, captives, with their fettered feet,
And weight, in their gyved hands, of brazen chains,
Slay, in night-tumult, many Roman soldiers.

Bodvocos, wakened, in his fever-dream ;
Being all, at cry of fire ! his guards fled forth ;
Upleaping, in his own hall, caught a staff ;
And by a Tuscan lamp's dim shimmering light,
Groping, where he bethought him lay the duke,
In litter, it to-dasht, with furious force !
But, in night's tempest, ere, went Aulus forth.
Nor yet the legate rests, for busy thought ;
On whom lies weight, of all this war, for Cæsar.

Returned, his servants, raging, find Bodvocos,
Whom left they bounden, as one half forgot ;
Nor lightly, again, might all together take ;
So, frenzied, he lets drive, to every part !

Barefoot, tread Beichiad's venging charioteers,
Without-forth, silent ! They, now, the king's porch ;
(Hoping to find and slay, therein, chief Romans,)
Enter : from threshold, hurl now with sharp glaives,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Of glittering bronze ! Then short and dreadful strife :
They smite, to death, as hunters beasts, those servants !

Bleeding, on floor, dead-seeming, they Bodvocos
Find, for had one, whom he hurt ere of Romans,
Betwixt the shoulders, pierced him. The prince lifting,
They say ; He is not dead, hath pulse his heart !
As precious thing, they bear the hurt king forth,
On their wet shoulders, twixt them, softly laid.
Not wont to fear, now fearful men they are :
Through storm, through flames, how might, without
mishap,

And danger of armed thousands of strange Romans,
They steal, to-night, him forth. But those, when nigh
Now to dune walls, were met with, by the watch
Of soldiers, which relieve the guard, with Aulus ;
Where few, gainst many, fighting, fell those all ;
And, smitten, died king Bodvocos a new death !

Full is of bitter smoke, Corinium dune ;
Of blowing flame and lurking foes, unseen :
By whose shot shafts, out of the covert night,
Die many Romans, pierced. And when now, erst,
New day begins, through misty reek, to break,
The last of Beichiad's charioteers scape forth.

The prætor gave commandment, then ; Off-smite
Bodvocos' head, and crucify the corse :

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

But nail his long-haired poll, high, on tall
mast,

To take away the glast-stained Britons' hearts.

Which fell out contrary ; for more hardy grown,

Britons, in open day, durst, ofttime, rush ;

And desperately contend scale Romans' work !

Tempting, still, save their king Bodvocos' corse.

Romans who vanquished, hardly adventure forth !

BOOK XIV

ARGUMENT

AULUS enquires concerning Verulam. Britons vex the legions' march. They take, again, Calleva, from the Romans; and slay all that are found therein. The Guledig, Segontorix. Romans, returned, find Calleva destroyed now, by the Britons.

Claudius Cæsar sets forth, from Rome, for the Britannic war. His trireme ship, overtaken by storm; he is saved, to Ligurian coast.

Caratacus now passeth Thames; and tarries, in a wood-side, to make funeral games, for Togodumnos. Wise counsel of Manannan. The first day's sacred pomp. The Romans approach. Now, at morrow, when a ford is found, the legions pass over to battle. Geta, beset, is hardly saved. Gorran chaceth, before him, a drove of horn-beasts, that fall upon the Roman ranks. Morag is slain, by Titus. Evening of that day of battle. His burial. Grief of Caratacus.

Tidings come from Gaul, that Claudius embarked. Aulus, at day, proposes a truce, for funerals of the dead. Response of king warlord Caratacus. Council of Briton kings. Caratacus, the same night, marches, with a part of his army, to meet Cæsar, at Kent's shore. Upon Antethrigus, Icenian magistrate, is fallen the sacred lot; to be grand-captain of the host left, at Thames, in arms. The warlord's march to Cantion cliffs.

Romans have loost from Gesoriacum port. First to assail them, in the narrow seas, are Iscan ships. Afterward, that pirates' fleet have set upon Romans, which Bloodaxe, earl, commands. A pirate keel mishaps; and the raven-standard is taken. Yet, ere the fall of night; have, with now sea-faring Cæsar's Romans, met Thorolf's returning Almain ships.

Claudius' Romans, entered Thames' mouth, cast anchor in an hythe. At cockcrow, they disembark. Krui the maimed. Word hereof is come to King Caratacus, on Cantion cliffs, at morning-break; who has received, already, grievous tidings of the destruction of his army; which he left, at Thames, with Antethrigus.

BOOK XIV

RAIN on Corinium burned, incessantly
In the next days, the lowering island skies.
Aulus reads forth, in comments of the war,
Which Julius waged, (ere ninety years,) in Britain.
Then, called, to him, his guides requires the legate ;
Where is that Verulam, The-heart-of-Britain,
Dune, eretime, of a king named Cassiobellan ?
They answer ; Towards sunrising, from this
town,
Six marches. But, and taken were Veru-
lamion,
Should fall the more tribes, from Cuno-
belin's son ;
And all this warfare, shortly, then, were
ended.
Much marvels Aulus, where blue Britons' army,
Became, in the last days ! He, to Calleva,
Deems good return ; and thence withdraw his cohorts,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

He left for garrison ; and with speed, passed Thames,
March to assail that royal Verulamion,
Whose king rules, o'er South tribes, of all blue
Britons.

Wait but the clarion's sound, ready to march,
That levied have their tents, the joyful legions :
Which heard, with all their carriage, they pass forth ;
And with rude songs of soldiers, cheer their path.
They journeying, all day, see no Briton chariots ;
That for refreshing of their teams, were driven,
To valley of sweet pasture, in the rain.

A certain hird was sitting on green hill,
One rich, before the coming of the legions,
In field and fold, and goods and wicker cote ;
Whose wont, in days of his ere happier state,
Was, tossing pebbles in his fist, or with
Crisp lip, loud shrilling, on his shepherd's pipe ;
Or warbeling, soft, among his bleating flock,
Of love-longing, his careless stars to spill :
But all his weal the Roman-Gaulish horse
Have borne away, a prey ; reaved, burned and wasted !
Whence is he now become the beacon's watch.

This, spied far-gleaming arms, of enemies' march ;
Rathe kindled his, there heaped, much gathered wood :

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

So raised thick smouldering smoke, of stalks and grass.
Sith armed, with only sling and bat, run-forth,
On strong swift feet ; he, passed much upland coast ;
And tiding bare, to Fythiol, within night.

That duke then, of the scythe-carts, of East March,
Leads forth, (dim shines the moon, in falling rain,)
Ere twilight of new dawn, five hundred chariots.

They come down, nigh where Romans' camp, now
halt :

Lest, even of their feltered wheels, the noise
Were heard, and their horn-footed steeds. To grass,
Leapt charioteers, anon ; there left in hands,
Of few of theirs, to ward the smoking teams,
With silent foot, those steal forth, with their arms.

Now are they come, to the first slumbering cohorts ;
Which, weary from long march, and no foes seen,
Were lain, unfenced, to-night, down in the plain ;
Neath Summer stars, about their dying fires.
Even the helmed watch drowse, leaning on their arms.

Who sleep, dream hideous voice ! By bitter stroke,
Of glaive, those wake ; to sleep, in endless death.
Britons pierce and slay forth then stranger Romans ;
Strong robbers those, slumbering in their wet fields,
Not guests ! till their red hands ache. Soon, heard
tumult !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

With harnessed hasty tread, the Romans' watch
Approach. Like fierce wolves, then, in the night-
murk,

Blue Britons, which have houghed the tethered steeds,
Of Gauls and Roman knights, scape forth to war-
carts.

Buried the dead, at day, then soldiers march :
(Fierce is whose countenance, for that ire, which fills
More, daily, in this Britannic war, their breasts !)
Nor Britons cease the legions' trains to grieve.
Each hour, they kill, cut-off and carriage seize.
Romans, now weak in horse, more slowly pass.
Nor aught abates blue Britons' hardihood !
Calling, for vengeance, on their gods, they ride ;
Careless of wounds, despising warlike death.

In that defection of Segontorix,
Withdrawn, awhile, with his main power, to woods,
Warlord Caratacus is, before the Romans.
Though meal brought Britons, in their four-wheel
wains,
And, with the host, are driven flocks and horn-beasts ;
And feed forth swine-herds for them, in the forest :
Yet all were less, than, many days, suffice,
So great an army of Britons' might to eat.
Wherefore, whilst many arrive, other turn home.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

But being, by Kynan's coming, sith increased ;
When they have digged, and laid their battle-dead,
In foster-mould ; march swiftly long-haired Britons,
Whose meaning now is to surprise Calleva.

Through storm, through rain, leads Caradoc chosen
men.

Come nigh that dune, rushed Britons, from thick groves.
First on the bulwark, Hammer-axe did seize :
On other part, stout Thorolf, with tall Almain.

There left, with Roman sick, were chapman wights,
Slave-merchants are the most, men wont, on mules,
To softly ride, amidst the legions' carriage ;
With hope, to enrich them, of poor Britons' loss.
None such, nor suppliants, Britons leave alive :
Nor, (the dune taken,) even captive Briton wives ;
Lest such, being outraged, they should bring forth
Romans !

Laid Caer Calleva's dust, with Roman blood !
Britons heap, glittering, there, against the sun,
That cometh up, now, as flames, to rot their flesh ;
Helms, harness, spoils and arms, to their war-gods.
Kindled their blood-stained furious hands then fires ;
They leave, new-burning, that accurséd place.

Yet, heard not warsire king Caratacus,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Whither Segontorix, parted from him, went.
The Guledig, night-time, rode, by a murk forest ;
Where being, of him, in that his furious mood,
Afraid, his servants, one by one, spersed forth,
In green-wood paths ; which seeing, at morrow-tide,
Segontorix ; he, would, (deeming himself scorned),
Then, proudly, on Bladmar, his renowned broad glaive,
Have died ; but, feigned some heavenly sign, his druid,
Of favourable birds, withheld, uneath !

Segontorix, with dark looks, then, towards South
March,

Rode forth : where, come to Belges' Cogidubnos ;
He, with that traitorous king, dwelled in his court,
And even in his war-booth, pitcht in wide field.

Sith Cogidubnos, moved by false Vigantios,
Lay a wait to slay him ; lest so warlike lord,
Before their own unworth, should be preferred.
But he, had timely warning of their fraud,
Through woman-thrall, one faithful to his house,
Born at Calleva, escaped, that night, to wood :
Where, madding in his mind, for fell despite,
He cursed man's kin ! till happed the Guledig meet,
Wandering, another day, in the wide wood,
Base swineherd ; who drives, in that oaken shaw,
His grunting drove. This, in his boisterous speech,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Tells, *Caer Calleva* is taken! and were, therein,
All stranger bloody Roman soldiers slain!

Brake-forth, like dew, on the king's wildered front,
A sweat, then, token of returning health.

Yet lurks he, in that wood-side, from all men's view,
(Whom he abhors!) save of few sullen druids,
Which in rough bramble-brakes, and hollow trunks,
And thicket boughs of oaks, have lairs and bowers.
Running with sharp war-darts, *Segontorix* hunts,
Dun roes, for his day's meat, now, in wild forest:
Yet having, in dim holts and the brown brakes,
None certain harbour, or abiding place.

Not little is delayed the legions' march,
By daily onsets of the Britons' war-carts,
Erupting from all woods: the chariot courses
Succeeding one another, without cease.
Weary they nigh, at length, to *Caer Calleva*.

When looked they, should now greet them merry
note,
Of clarions, from yond paled new Roman walls;
And shine, above, bright helms of fellow-soldiers,
The rampire desert is! They hear no voice:
But seen are ravens, flying and alighting.
Avert, (all cry,) the omen, gods! discerning
A vapour rise, as smoke, now, from yond walls.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Behold, then, open gates ! A feter smites,
Their sense, ah ! horrible. Halts now, with loud
trumpet,

His legions Aulus ; and he sends forth horse.

Those entering find all silent, blackened walls,
Thatch smouldering ; squalid, with much gore, the dust ;
And all the air ahum, with filthy flies !

Grave rotten stench of half-burned carcases ;
Which beaks of crows have rent, and teeth of hounds.
They see, in all the ways, lie murdered Romans.

And who rode further, to the market place,
Saw trophy heaped, of Roman shields and arms ;
Glaives, hauberks, shining helms ; spears, cohort's
ensigns.

Then found was wounded follower of the camps,
Half-quick, one only of all remained alive ;
That barked hoarse, to them, from neath bank of corses.
To him, drawn forth, Scribonius gives now drink,
Hot wine, with herbs ; whilst supple men his joints,
(As wont is in the bath ;) and he revives.
Yet so sore mate he is, he might, uneath,
Sigh forth, to Romans ; The third sun is this,
Sith Britons' slaughter ! Such, the fainting
wretch,

Said forth ; he in Scribonius' arms, deceased.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Soldiers, their Roman dead draw to the dyke ;
And rake down on them, overthrown the walls,
Much earth. This sepulture have their fellow-
soldiers !

So, made them ready ; they, with vengeful hearts,
And sounding trumps, march from that impious place.

Now, by foot-runners, tiding out of Kent,
Caratacus, from lord Dumnoveros, hath ;
Lies, these days gathered, in all river-mouths,
Of Gaul's mainland, a new great Roman navy,
Ready to embark soldiers : and is Claudius
Cæsar now looked for, to arrive from Rome.

The port Trigemina, Claudius passed, with pomp
Of purpled magistrates, and great Rome's proud Senate :
And hopes return triumphing, clad in weed
Of gold, with glorious laurel in his hand !

Embarked at Ostia ; he, with guard of soldiers,
That eve, sailed forth. The fourth night of their
voyage,

Bellowed swart heavens ; and fell a mighty tempest,
O'er wild waves waste. Cæsar's great trireme ship
Rowed under land ; and labouring, with bruised oars,
Wind-buffeted, twixt coast and roaring billows ;
Was like be cast on a lee shore, and perish !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Rome's emperor hath, unprofitable Claudius,
Being hardly saved, under Ligurian coast ;
Now entered in small haven, Antipolis :¹
Whence riding, many days, by mountain paths ;
To rich Massilia, he is reached, at length.
Thence, by paved street, which through all Gaul, upleads,
He journeys forth, in wains, with guard of horse.
Yet partly Claudius, as in Summer heat,
Swift streaming Rhone, in gilded barge, ascends.

Lo, Thames' wide ford, where Caradoc now arrives,
Is streaming shoulder-high of his tall Britons,
As after rain. Swimming their chariot steeds,
The army hardly o'erpass. Caratacus
To certain slade,² withdraws, then, his caterfs ;
Twixt that ford's head, lies open and hill-woods :
Whereas, in doom-ring, of great unhewed stones,
Stand altars, hallowed of all neighbour tribes.

Wont Briton lords lead, with them, their chief
druids :
And was, behight, now, druids ; In this place,
Be holden, three days, solemn sacrifice ;
To memory of kîng, warsire, dead Togo-
dumnos.

¹ Now Antibes.

² An open ground in woodland ; A. Sax. *slad*, a valley.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

When this have runners published, in nigh march ;
From hundred wattle-hamlets, and from cotes,
Much people wend ; even from Caer Verulam hearths.
By valley and hill, when time of night, they pass ;
Or journeying, in day's light, hold forest paths ;
For fear, (nor they armed folk,) to be cut-off :
So far in field, have Romans sent out horse.

Come bereaved women, mothers of slain men,
And wailful widows to Caratacus ;
Which heard, should a great weeping there be made,
Of every kindred, for their fallen ones.
The first day, for slain warlord Togodumnos,
With chants of bards ; the second for Bodvocos ;
The third for who most, mongst South tribes, of
name.

The fourth day, to the commons, should be given ;
In many a field, they sleep ! Caratacus,
Should poll his long gold locks. In such discourse,
Come mingled throngs, in many upland paths :
Nor yet, with voices shrill, they raise lament.

Captains and kings, the while, in council, sit.
Some read, Before the marching Romans, best
Were burn and waste. Some mean, Main
power of Britons,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Should join, with Claudius, battle at Kent's
coast.

Manannan gives good counsel, Send, in ships,
A power to strive, beyond the seas, with
Romans,

In their own Province. Should not Gauls
revolt,

And Romans be constrained withdraw their
legions?

Duneda and Moelmabon praise this read,
As wisdom from the gods. In glittering harness,
Leapt bear-strong, on his feet, and elk-swift Thorolf.
Lifting to skies, that antique brand of Brennus ;
Gods of our sires! he cries, and heroes'
spirits!

To Summer-lands, lead on, before our
armies:

So shall we Italy burn again and Rome!

How sigh, with mourning sound, these woods ;
and seems

Cover the heavens, so wide, black funeral weed ;
And skies to weep, for Togodumnos' death !
Camog and Morfran, riding in one chariot,
Open the sacred pomp, at afternoon.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Stand children, with them, of dead lord Bodvocos.
And, after, with king Caradoc, comes on foot,
Illustrious band of kings! their long gilt locks
Have polled, for grief of Togodumnos' death ;
And on the altar laid : and now are crowned
Their royal fronts, with the swart boughs of yew.
With solemn chant, then, barefoot druids pace.
Sith, thousand men of war, reversed their arms ;
An hundred chosen out of every nation :
And tears distained have many a woad-grim face.

Lo, she, who wimpled women's train upleads,
Mothers of fallen men and handfast maids,
Undone, is wailful Loga, of Cunobelin,
Daughter ; and sister to three battle-kings,
Widow of slain Bodvocos, dead of face.
And as she wends, on her bare feet, she weeps.
Tear-worn, these many nights and days, she droops ;
That seemed she primrose pale, dank with night-dew ;
Yet appears majesty, in her travailled looks.
Women which follow, weeping, her, have loosed
Their long gold, broidered, hairs. Casting oft shrieks ;
These beat their virgin paps, those wrong their dug ;
And all they rend their blubbered cheeks, to blood,
(Cheeks that seemed lilies ;) chanting, as they trace,
The funeral lamentation, for slain men ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

That fallen, in battle, are, upon their faces.
Three times, those turn, the people all beholding,
Weeping their dead, round builded empty pyre.

Camog and Morfran, which before them ride,
Are drawn of the teamed steeds of Togodumnos,
In white emalled winged scythe-cart of Cunobelin.
Those foster-brethren set forth, in dumb show,
His sudden hurt ; how, from the king's hands, fell
The reins, and fainted, under him, his knees :
How leaned, on his broad shield, the king a moment ;
And when he sank down, swooning, in his chariot,
How beat his helm, alas, on the cart-brow !

Such seeing, do loudly weep thick-thronging Britons ;
That hill and river-mead, with mighty sound,
Rebellow of armed nation, that lament.
Nor the, gold-girt, warlord, Caratacus,
Standing mongst his high peers and royal warriors,
Kings of the glast-stained nations, with bared heads,
Might more his mighty soul refrain from sobs :
So, for his germain, he afflicts himself,
He was not nigh, to shield, in battle-press,
Nor did receive his brother's dying breath.

At afternoon, begins, then, funeral feast ;
And by their several fires, each people's bards
Harp and chant praises of their fallen warriors.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Druids, at altars, hundred slay, swart bulls,
And without number sheep, for the caterfs ;
Whereafter should be quenched all Briton hearths ;
Nor, sith, food cooked, by fire, should any eat ;
Till new flame, for that old contaminate,
Have raised the sacred hands of the kings' druids.

Now eve ; and the whelked stars seem hide their
heads :

When mourned this people have, their fill, and wept,
For Togodumnos' death. Yet wives, gone forth,
With Loga, wait at heads of all the paths.
There clapping hands, these shrill, aloud, the names ;
Calling all spirits, of who are lately dead,
Return ! But went forth are the dead, like voice,
Which turns no more. Weep, women ! Loga cries,
Weep with me, and bewail, for Togodumnos,
His people's shield, who leading the caterfs,
Some great hart seemed, at border of dim
grove,
Which tosseth, in his pride, his mighty
horns ;
And for Bodvocos, matchless, both, in arms :
In whose burned city, ah ! his severed corse,
Lies without honour of a funeral weed !

But come, again, into the hallowed place,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Where kings and druids ; and flame the altar-hearths ;
Loga, (whose arms more white than crudded milk,)
With deadly cheer, embraced to her dear paps,
Her children small, fell down in a dead trance ;
For swoons her heart ! and rue on her all Britons.

Men slumber in dun brakes, under long shields,
Pillowed on leafy moss, in the wild wood ;
Their bed the forest earth, high heavens their house.
They sleep, nor look for coming of strange Romans.
Them, who uneasy sleep, wakes often voice
Of women's wailing, and loud smitten hands !
When spread new cheerful light is, on the earth,
Shall funeral games be made, of men and steeds ;
Warriors to battle armed, and swift-teamed chariots.
And warlord Caradoc, many a noble meed,
To each day's victors, shall divide, at eve ;
When sacrifice should be holden and high feast.
And all the tribes, assembled, with their druids ;
Shall lay a curse on Britons, which gainst Britons,
Partake with the invading stranger Romans :
But, ah ! a nation's prayer reject the gods !

Yester, his Belges' spies, brought word, to Aulus ;
Passed Thames, again, have Britons' most caterfs ;
And minished, Romans marked, the daily assaults

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Of scythe-carts. Aulus deems must shortly fail
That barbare host, for lack of needful victual ;
Nathless, he seeks ; (for his own need of corn,)
And that anon, join battle with blue Britons.

Behold the legions' trains, marching far-off,
That seem a creeping flame, in their approach.
To Thames' fair river-meads, they now arrive :
But these, for fallen much rain, be made wide fleets.
There seek Gauls' horse, to find some ford, till eve.
Now night, bring Belges' scouts, to Aulus' camp,
Word ; they, in twilight, ridden forth, heard loud chant
And harping, as of druids ; and seemed all full
Thames' creekly shore, of fires and shining arms !

The streaming river goes down, all this night ;
And Aulus sends, towards day, certain men, wont,
(Allies of Rome,) on bladder floats, to pass,
Bearing up weed and arms, the flood of Rhine.
Whilst march his heavy-armed, on this side, forth ;
Those overswim ; and on Thames' further part,
Close creeping, (now nigh day,) by thickets ; erst,
They light, on some dim camp of Briton chariots ;
Whose weary riders laid late, down, to rest,
In the short Summer night. And stand their teams,
Bounden, beside the war-carts ; from whose wheels,
The bloody hooks ; and from whose beams, were doffed

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Long scythes of bronze : and, after barley ears,
Now trampling, rife, the daisy sod ; they crop,
Through the long night, their sickle-reaped heaped
grass.

Gins spring small morning fowls' new mingled
voice.

Nor tarry pierce Batavians, on the earth,
Drivers of war-carts ; and they hough their steeds.
(Wake Britons' gods, and save your drowsing
warriors !)

Hewing and slaying, went those enemies forth ;
Nor stint, till strewed is all that silent mead,
With corpses, of whose blood ben plashes made !

Light shining, in their eyes ; gin cartmen rouse !
Dreaming mischance ; and heavy start to foot.
Fell yell, then, bellows from their yawning throats !
Beholding slain their fellows on this grass,
Inglorious ; and who smite them are of Romans.
Though few, they on those run, with furious force.

Heard their loud clamour is of Aulus' legions,
Beyond Thames ; and where founden now was ford :
And they, half-swimming, the cold flood o'erpass.
Rise up, from their night-lairs, caterfs of Britons.
Loud sound to arms ! their bronze deep-throated
warhorns.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Leapt on his feet, who aye wont, in his harness,
By his yoked team, to sleep, Caratacus.
Rapt, knits the king's own hands his royal steeds,
To great Cunobelin's scythe-cart. Straight, he
mounts ;

And smites the warlord's helm, day's rising god.

How looketh him Caradoc, round about, as Camulus!
Hark, Gorran! the king calls ; who cometh, anon,
Running : and hastily upleaps the sire beside ;
Who already, in white-winged, bronze-axe-wheeled,
shrill war-cart,

The supple reins shakes. Then the three-horse team,
Whinnying, at their lord's voice, stoopt their broad
croups,

Rush forth, spurning the mould, that seems to smoke,
Under their glittering hooves ; which swart earth-clods
Cast up so thickly, as those the flocking crows
Were, which wont gather to a slaughter-place.

Is their lord's foster-hand which guides them forth ;
With wondrous skill, mongst stubs and fallen trees,
Bushes and mire of that encumbered soil.
He late lay down ; and yet he had not slept.
Like as who bread, unto the hungry, casts,
Caradoc cries warlike words, to blue caterfs ;
Putting each one in mind of fathers' deeds.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Erst Dobuni, then, brake forth, and Beichiad's war-carts ;
With eager yells, to avenge their lord Bodvocos.

Lo, Geta marching, with the foremost legion ;
And him, with headlong fury, they fall on.
With sudden brunt, they hurl back his first cohorts ;
And straight was Geta's horse thrust through, of lance.
To hollow heavens, rebellow yells of Britons,
A Roman king is fallen, for Togodumnos !

But the stout eagle-bearer of that legion,
Outran, against them, leading shielded press ;
Of veteran soldiers, which, beside all hope,
With strenuous fight, their tribune snatcht from death.
Mounts Geta, only bruised, on new war-horse ;
And dusty sweat wipes from his hardy face.
For his own broken, glaive of fallen soldier,
Is reached to him. Then Geta, his targe embraced,
He himself impetuous onset leads. Yet Romans,
Uneath, might beat, then, backward, glast-stained
Britons !

Thick javelins' sleet, hurled of Italic soldiers,
Put Dobuni to the worse ; whom pursue Romans.

Sith hasted Geta, taking bands of horse ;
A compass ride, about dark alder wood :
Whence now he falls, unwares, on Britons' backs !
So brake their host, in two unequal parts.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Blue Britons' powers are hemmed, twixt stream and
hill,

In narrow room ; where only a part oppose
Can king Caratacus, against thick legions.
Stedfast, the Romans fight, with vengeful hearts.
Nathless, by ensample and his mighty voice,
Which reacheth far afield, whilst Gorran holds
The reins, Master of war, (whose mighty hands
Hurling aye sharp-fledged darts,) the king sustains,
Gainst plate-clad cohorts, that unequal strife ;
Which raged, sometime, about his royal chariot.

Gorran bethought him, then, on a good wile.
He Beichiad calls, stand for him, in the scythe-cart ;
And bear large shield, before the warlord's breast,
Wherein, twinned dreadful dragons shine embossed,
With coral eyes and white emalléd breath.
It forged a famous shield-wright, in West March.
Gorran, ran to the ox-herd, gathered drove
Of horn-beasts ; which for whole-burned sacrifices,
And the army's funeral feast, had been reserved.
With withies and with ropes, then hastily knit
Those beves' grim necks ; he chaces furious forth.
Running, with wide embowed horns, sharp as darts ;
And, thwartwise, falling, on Rome's battle-ranks ;
Those trample and confound their ordinance.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

In this, the Icenian valour, deep caterfs,
Thick groves of spears, fall freshly on that legion
Vespasian leads, in triple stedfast ranks.
Vieing East and West March, in warlike worth ;
Kynan's caterfs assail then, shaken cohorts !
Soldiers, that fly to Thames, pursue swift scythe-carts ;
Whose hawk-like riders pierce the most to death.

Few win, to further bank ; and dripping thank,
Trembling, in harness cold, their saviour gods.
Labours his legion ; hark, bove battle-din,
Great duke Vespasian, shouting to his soldiers !
They, needs, must vanquish ; else, most dire-
ful death

Them waits : their bodies rent at altar-
hearths,
Of bloody gods, and should blue Britons'
druids

Their panting bowels pluck, from their
bleeding chests !

Vanquish, or die, then, as becometh soldiers.

Against Dumnonians, Cæsar's legate fights.
Those press on Romans, with returning force,
In river-mead. One wounded of his team,
To ground, leapt Morag, from his foundering
chariot ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And drawn bright glaive, would smite atwo the trace.
Gainst him a knight of Rome, advanced his lance :
But valorous Morag smote atwain that wood ;
And beat the sword this drew, then, from his hand ;
And would have slain his foe : but in that point,
Fresh troop of Gaulish horse him overrode !

Who Morag thrilled with dart, was Flavian Titus.
Pierced through the navel, (where the hurt is death,)
Could Camluc's son not rise, to fight for life :
But to his foeman turned, with gnashing teeth,
His manly face, his eyeballs flame out ire.
And seest thou, ah, Togodumnos, mongst the gods !
Is Morag fallen, thy friend, thy loved companion.
Nor mighty men of Isca's royal house,
In so vast press of shields, might save his corse.

Stand still Dumnonian arms, at that crude sight !
And brake great mournful cry, from all their throats,
When abhorred Romans, o'er his body, pass !
Nor might the battle, then, Silurian Maglos,
Alone, sustain with his swart warriors ;
For, backward, hurls them strong new head of soldiers.
Nor might moon-shield Belerions ; nor whom leads,
King Golam, Durotriges ; nor main brunt
Of Trinobants ; nor royal Catuvelaunians,
Being hemmed in little room, bear to them aid.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

The battle staggers, partly joined in woods,
Part, in 'Thames' meadows, to his pebble brinks.
The day yet young, men's limbs run down with sweat,
And their sore-travailed breasts draw fiery breath.
Is purpled, with much gore, 'Thames' miry sod ;
And quakes, as rotten fen, with warriors' tread,
And rushing steeds and battle-chariots.
But grows aye Britons' strength and hardihood.
Broad Thames runs down, among his sedges sweet,
Blood-stained, now full of fleeting carcasses.

But when day verging to mid-afternoon,
Men say ; amongst his silver waters, rose,
With hoary breast and sidelong dropping beard,
That, sedge-hemmed, antique Father-river's god :
Unto whom all streaming waters of the Isle
Be subject, on this part ; as be all floods
His brother Severn's children, on West-half ;
(Yet Severn's high fresh fords, his daughter, Deva,
Now rules.) And though, for Father Thames, this new
World's face ; since o'er his channels Julius passed,
Bears strange mutation ! (to his soul is geason.¹)
Yet pitying, in his mind, divine, blue Britons ;
He Belin prayed, his rarious gold-wheeled chariot
Drive down more vehement, in West bent of heaven.

¹ A. Sax. *gesine* ; barren, empty, lacking.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Heard him the god. Like erne, stooped to sea-streams,
His team ! that entering, towards their golden stalls,
(Cloud-curtained cloisters,) fades now the day's light.

Look, from that glooming firmament, then high gods,
On angry swarms of men, fighting in ranks.
Like to a fire the spears of Britons' front,
And legions' orders like wide-glittering waves !
And wipe desire of battle from all hearts.

Sith rising up, from Thames, cool evening breath,
Romans ; and Britons, with Caratacus,
Who Morag mourns, with one consent, draw off.
Wends peaceably, so encumbers weariness,
The hearts of all, each army, then, to lodge.
Sith, mingled, go down men and beasts, to drink,
On pebble-strand of Thames' green oozy brinks.

Dark, without moon, and dreadful to both parts,
Night closes in ; wherein Caratacus,
Warlord, for Morag, mourns. Uprising soon,
He himself, that, little moment, he did rest ;
Who battled all day hath, to eat, reproves :
Whilst, yet, in field, unburied, Morag lies.

Him light forth, bearing brands of cloven pine,
Servants ; with mighty men, o'er gore-stained grass.
Some shout ! Is found already of Isca men ;
(Where lie dead heaps of steeds, and warriors slain,) .

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Morag ; how trampled, ah, of horses' hooves,
And bruised, alas, dead on his noble face !
That, uneath, without washing, his own warriors
Might read the hero's semblant ! Lie confused,
(Where reaped Dumnonian glaives,) Romans with
Britons.

Groaning, the hero, slain, on his burst targe ;
They lift. The sire, with his own mantle, shrouds
His body. And treading, weary, on the dim mould,
His men, by turns, bear forth his nodding corse.
Goes up, great-paced, before them, Caradoc.
On that high hollow womb of Mother Night,
(Whose seed these flaming stars, which men call gods !)
Gazing, mused the warlord, in mourning mood :
How, to us wretched wights, no sign, those give,
That worship them, with daily sacrifices !
On ground. And bitter is his thought, had Thorolf,
Been here ; and the four courses of his chariots,
Had this sun seen the Romans' overthrow !
Wherein, grief upon grief, is perished Morag ;
Whom Togodumnos loved, as his own breath.

For need of provender ; were the teams of chariots
Withdrawn. And the Almain ethling, yester, marched,
When had he sacrificed, for Togodumnos ;
Heard tiding, that his keels, which sailed, with grain,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

From Elbe's mouth, were, to Troynovant, come in.
Would not the hero, of his noble mind,
In so great war and straitness of the time,
Be chargeable, unto the soil of Brennus.

Passing, with grieved thought, forth, Caratacus,
The night-wind, to his ear, known weary voice
Bears ; where lies gory most the battle-grass,
The warlord stands ; whilst men bring torches' light.
And Morfran have they found, one of those twain
Forefighters, fosters of dead Togodumnos.

Ashamed, so long, they their dead lord survive,
They, all night, waked, in hoping soon for death.
But heard new cry of Romans ; ready leapt,
Both, to yoked scythe-cart, longtime battled. Lies
Now Morfran wallowed, on this trod-down grass.
Fallen on his shield-arm is dead chariot-horse.
The sharp hooks wounded him, of their war-wheels,
And yerking hooves of his own dying steeds.
They sore have bruised and broken his pale face !
His other hand, yet straining spear, hewed is
Nigh off : ah, horrid war ! And tarries, yet,
His warlike ghost to flit. On Camog, oft,
He calls, cast with him, from their foundered scythe-
cart :

But this lies cold and stiff, already passed !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Brethren together fighting, in one chariot,
They a tribune pierced to death, for Togodumnos,
Frontinus Ælius, of the *pia* legion,
To them opposed. But flocking Gaulish horse,
Hurling thick javelins, wounded both their steeds,
That madding, in death pangs, o'erthrew the scythe-
cart.

Here was fell Britons most, here thickest fight.
Hence lie blue dead, strewed to an alder wood,
All bushes sprent are with their jelly-blood !
The royal footstep Morfran knew and voice,
Of his warlord, germain of Togodumnos.
But his numbed other hand, being now released ;
He, raught knife, fiercely his own gorge smote there-
with !

Camog lies stark, under their battle-cart.

Bear forth the royal fosters, (made, their shields,
Their biers,) the warlord's men. Dumnonians march,
Before, that bear prince Morag's frozen corse.
Then, as the sire commanded, by red light
Of smoking torches, digged is one wide grave ;
Before the altars of their sacrifices :
Wherein they lay them, in their bloody harness.

By the death-pit, upon his homicide spear,
Leans great Cunobelin's son ; and in his spirit,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

He curseth Romans, authors of this war.
Drop Caradoc's tears, on Morag's bruised dead face,
Companion of his youth, with Togodumnos.
First cast in, on them, mould, his royal hands.
Great loss have Britons, by prince Morag's death.

Hark women's mourning, in this river-camp !
Now night ; and Briton maidens war-bereaved ;
(Whom formed had, as the lily flowers, high gods :)
For Morag dead, is their loud wailing voice ;
Then, for all battle-slain. Had those even caught,
To-day, themselves up stones, and hurled on Romans !
Bear some ones purple stains of battle-wounds.
Other, in fury, advancing them ; by the hairs,
Were haled, and slain, of swart wolf-suckled Romans.

Spread Gorran a bull's hide, for his warlord ;
Whereon, now laid him, Caradoc sleeps anon ;
For weary is he, with battle ; and strong men
Him ward around, with hundred glittering spears.
Unquiet sleeps he, in this moonlight, and dreams.

Him thought he saw, flow, in wide firmament,
Then bloody stream, from altars of his gods,
Of Britons' wounds ! He saw, thereat, rife spirits,
From faery hills, (that open lie, to-night !
And therein, dwell, men say, the newly dead ;)

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And gods descend, drawn of immortal steeds.
Him thought he saw, pale, come from sunless gate,
Of shadows, drive with them, his sire Cunobelin.

Gods held, to Cantion's sea, their course, forthright ;
Whom all Red Taran's stormy cart forerides.
War-faring seemed they, in whose divine hands,
Were spears and glaives. And they were like to gods,
Whose imagery of sheen ivory and burned gold,
And marble stone, in temples of great Rome,
And clay, in Gaul's mainland, had Caradoc seen.
Yet, as he gazed, was left the sire Cunobelin,
On a white reeling cliff, looks o'er salt main,
Smitten by hollow, endless, surges round,
Wild daughters of the deep, in triple ranks.

And, to Cunobelin, came a spirit, upheld
The sire, that languished ; who sits battle-armed,
And gave a long bright glaive, into his hand ;
And cried ; The event is hid, O glory of Britain !

Then waked, with sore constraint, Caratacus.
He sweats and shook himself, from sleep, uneath.
So rose, with mind to visit round the watch :
For he beholds yet shine, in heaven's wide steep,
Those plough-beves bright, which draw the wain of
Samoth ;
Still watching o'er his Isle, with jealous eye.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And, lo, new omen, without thunder sound ;
A lightning flame, shot thwart the Summer night !
And, in the same, swift runners out of Kent,
To the warlord, arrive, from Dumnoveros,
With message ; Claudius, now, from Gaul's
mainland,
Embarked and paved the deep is with his
fleet.

All sleep the hostile hosts, in both the camps.
Slumber, for weariness, lo, the Roman guard,
Even as they stand, upleaning on their spears.
Only the legate wakes, that, with few dukes,
Takes counsel ; how might they win Verulam :
Since, soon, must corn be measured, to the soldiers :
Nor yet, unto their ears, comes, that sails Claudius,
From Gaul, with new supplies of men and victual.

Day dawning, Aulus sends forth certain Gaul,
One Laismor, wide-named for his great voice,
Like brazen trump, to publish, to blue Britons ;
He would, that were observed, on both their parts,
A day of truce, for pious funerals.

Thereto sent heralds, to the enemies' *vallum*,
His answer made the sire Caratacus,
On this wise : Britons so much of their earth

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Concede to Romans, as suffice to hide,
From the sun's eye, might their slain car-
cases.

He Britons' lord and king ; in his own house,
For aught that he should do, of none, asks license.
He Romans grants, for this day, pause of arms ;
And to call guests, (name sacred, mongst all Britons,)
Abhorréd soldiers ! Send, then, each camp, forth,
Thousand unarmed, to gather in their dead ;
Till this sun sets. Witness his truth the gods.

Sit Britons' kings out, in long parliament,
This Summer's sun. They drink brown dulcet mead ;
But bitter, as their hearts, the idle cup
Seems in their hands. And who is there not hath
Of his high kin, some one, or friendship, lost ?
In furrows deep, the slain together cast,
Men heap long mounds, on them ; whence called that
field,
By silver-streaming Thames, Mounds-of-the-brave.
A murmur is of lords, with untuned voice,
For grief ; that reason, touching the new cohorts,
Which brings, from Gaul, in with him, Cæsar
Claudius ;
Soon, these should also come to land, in Britain.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Then fell a new constraint, on all their hearts.
Captains and lords, last, gave to this, their voice ;
To send caterfs, to meet, at strand, Rome's fleet.
Their meaning is ; (what though divine Manannan
Mislikes,) with a main power, even this same night,
Britons' warlord, towards Cantion cliffs, should march.

Absent the sire, should conduct of the war,
Be in his hand ; on whom, by sacred lot,
Shall manifest high gods, they lay this charge.

Are demons which deceive your noble hearts,
O Island-kings, to Britons' extreme loss ;
Even whiles they drink reek of your sacrifices !
Nor longer tarrying ; fallen the fatal lot
Is on the Icenian war-duke, Antethrigus !
Who kings shall fare, make ready their caterfs.

With fifteen thousand spears, the warlord parts ;
Bearing those with them, only five days' victual ;
And with their fellows, left their bratts and stuff,
(As druids them prescribed,) they lightfoot pass,
Following, by Thames' side, Caradoc, who drives forth,
Before them, with an hundred Kent-men's scythe-
carts.

Strong Antethrigus, to Thames' lower ford,
Rides, with him. Leapt down, at dim streaming brink,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

(Whence he must wade or swim,) Caratacus
Drew, joined their hands, the East-men's duke apart :
And took all-Britons'-king, of him an oath,
By moon, and these high infinite starry gods,
Upon his sword! he delve and cast, this night,
A bank; and crown with pales, round,
 Britons' camp;
Wherein the people closed, (whose warlike
 powers,
By half-part now is minished,) with their
 beasts,
Ere sacred dawn; in safety, still, might
 wait;
Till he, to them, may turn again, from shore;
With victory, that is promised of the gods.
And if should march, from Thames, the
 legions forth;
And to them other Britons come, in arms,
Withdraw to wood, and still outwear the
 Romans;
But not join battle, in an open field!
 Caradoc, (unwist to Romans,) midnight, passed.
Are blowing warhorns heard, on Kent side Thames,
At day, of the king's marching Catuvelaunians.
Gather uplandish folk, to him, with bows

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And shafts ; wherewith they wont the flying hart
To thrill, in the dun brakes of Andred forest.
They pause, at noon, awhile, to eat and rest.
Sith lies by beechen hursts, and oaken groves,
Their path, whose mighty crooked arms embraced,
(Which guirland, oft, hoar woodbind's honey locks,)
Seem lulled, to slumber, of a smooth South wind.

Under night-heaven, which seems world's starry
tomb,

They halt ; they lie, till dawn, down, on their arms.
Comes Dumnoveros, then, with battle-chariots,
To meet them. The third day was, after this ;
When Britons' host arrived to Cantion cliffs,
Now lodge king Caradoc round, on the white grass.

Lo, weary warriors, shadowing with their palms,
Their eyeballs ! look, then, under the sun's shine,
Wide o'er salt waterfloods, towards Gaul's main-
land :

To wot, if yet come sails of enemies ;
Over the fleeting borders, which high gods,
Eternal fence, to this fair isle, assigned.

On the spring-flood, ere yester, Romans loosed,
From Gesoriacum,¹ in six-score longships,
With hulls of charge ; wherein stand elephants ;

¹ Boulogne.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

(Through Mauretania and Spain and Gaul, had
marched ;

And sith, were, at quay-side, hoised with strong
engines,

On their high boards, uneath.) In other hulls,
There lie gross beams, huge unknit frames, embarked,
Of wheeled machines ; to hurl huge stones and darts.
Shall train them, Cæsar's Afric elephants.

A full moon shining, lightens their sea-voyage.
But, (foes, in secret heart,) Armoric pilots,
So steer the Romans' ships ; that though, towards
Britain,

Be turned their beaks, yet in the tideway, driven,
Rome's fleet was, all night, towards the seven stars.

At day, a vast ; then, open sea appears !
Whence, doubting, Cæsar hastily sends for Vidius,
Chief pilot : whom, eftsoon, before him brought ;
To crucify, he threatens, on this mast !

If any, in him, unfaithfulness were found.
But Vidius shows, then, Cæsar, the sea's drift ;
How wind o'er waves, then waves o'er wind prevail.

Till the mid-afternoon, they row and sail :
When bear down on them ; that seem fleeting towers !
Tall barbare hulls. Wére those Dumnonian keels,
Which sends Duneda. And as few Briton chariots

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Invade a cohort ; rush on, confident,
Not otherwise their prow, winged of the wind.

Glast-stained, on the brown stems, like men in
scythe-carts,
Stand long-haired noble Iscan charioteers ;
In whose hands javelins, long sea-pikes, slings, spears ;
Grapnels and tallow and tar, in flaming pots.
The freshing wind, Britons' gross-timbered navy,
Drives, mainly, Roman longships now aboard.

Like flock of daws, cry, drenching, Cæsar's soldiers ;
Which, loosed from port, had deemed, under the yoke,
Of Rome imperial, flowed the very deep !
They founder in cold billows, drenching, choke,
In bitter brine ; whereon, can take none hold,
Their fearful hands. Iscans, which them o'errun,
Cry out, So perish Britons' enemies !

Chatter the toothless chaps of drivelling Claudius,
Known by his purple sail and gilded poop.
He dreads, midst mighty fleet, and marvels fast,
How full this sea-fare is of barbare arms !
Sowed dragon teeth, then, Æson's hardy son,
In these wild billows, under high plough stars ?
Whereof spring ships. He would, to all his gods,
That, from Italia, had he never sailed !

Kowain, who captains the Dumnonian navy,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Is borne through Romans' South wing, (that they
break,

Firing some ships ;) then, fetcht about, returns,
With swelling sails, made borde, on the North wind.
And as great beves, on droves of lesser beasts,
Trample, so their gross barbare hulls Rome's navy,
O'errun ! nor can contend Rome's stoutest soldiers,
Gainst Britons fighting from an higher board.

Those thrust through, nigh to the imperial galley ;
Which seeing cried mainly out Cæsar Claudius !
Are ship's-wreck, cold waves' death, fire-streaming
pitch,

Come nigh him ; whilst the barbare voice affrays
His very soul, of yond tall blue-stained wights ;
Rings o'er the unstable Ocean, in his ears !

Now falls the wind, men ween, at prayer of
Claudius,

Lifting his pontif's hands, to Rome's great gods.
Made the fleet-soldiers, then, new force of oars ;
And with no little loss, uneath, draw forth.
All rowing, they the wind-bound Briton hoys,
At length outgo ; and, sithen, lose from view.

Till night, when covered are the stars, they row.
Then weary they lie-to, not daring show
Light, in their lanterns. Mariners shout, from ship,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

To ship, all night ; and clarions softly blow.
Nor see men aught, when day begins to break ;
Nor, neath their swart-brown bilges, weltering deep,
For the night mist. With rising wind, this lifted,
They sail forth ; and hope, come, then, to some land.

But soon, behold, longships of single banks ;
Which rowed against them, with impetuous force !
Yell, in their forestems, shaped like swans and dragons,
Tall wights, of other barbared tongue than Gauls,
That handle other arms. Their crated, bulls'
Hide bulwarks, all along, and weather boards,
Ben hanged with painted shields. From the thwart
banks,
Rise helm-clad wights ; and on them lift bright
arms.

In woven mails, shine who the rest command.
Swords, bright bills, bent bows, are in their tough
hands !

Is that a pirate navy, from North-way,
And the East-sea ; and from the Amber Isles :
Long blue-straked and wing-breasted keels, that
walk
Paths of the wild salt waves, with hundred feet.
Though bark now swart-bleak billows, and wars rounded
The wind ; with sway of oars, a battle-wedge,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Of prows, with raven ensigns, they fall on ;
Spurning, that spumes again, the surging brine.

Stands every earl, to steer, in his back-stem ;
His champions, midst the throbbing banks of oars.
In the forestems, stand armed their mightiest ones ;
And their hoarse throats chant, Thunder, Tiu¹ and
Woden !

The pirates' fleet, as four-score long row-keels,
This night, from warding under Britain's cliffs,
Put out : the same which whilom called Cunobelin.
And they, that, as their own, the sea-waves ride,
More than all men, which neath the stars have being,
Are valorous ; and great Bloodaxe them commands.

The king of Jutes outwent then other pirates,
By fleetness of his keels. Stooping, at oars,
Those thrust now in, betwixt the soldiers' fleet,
And heavy sailing carracks : they hold scorn,
As ballast-sacks, of unseaworthy soldiers.
And aye the worse have Roman legionaries,
Men wont to battle only on firm land.
Then yells of Roman drenching multitude,
Resound : those grey waves foam out Latin blood.

But Bloodaxe steers, the legionaries' ships

¹ Father Sky, and antique war-god of German tribes ; of whom, the third day of the Teutonic week is named. The word is the same as Greek Zeus, Lat. Jovis, *etc.*

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

To pass, where lies less booty to his hands :
He Roman carracks mainly falls aboard.
Then grapnels hurled-out ; some inleap, with swords,
Some lightly o'errunning, on their banks of oars.

And slay the pirates all which, in them, sail,
With weapon ; or drive, o'er their boards, faint Romans,
With untuned laughter of loud barbared throats !
Men of high looks and hard unvanquished force,
Wolves of the stormy forest of sea deep.
But when the earl hath, of a pirate keel,
Some carrack cut or twain, from Roman navy ;
Being that as much as he might handle home,
In haggart seas, such, with their preys, fall off.
They take the large, and steer forsaking Romans.

Yet sped not all of those bold Esterlings.
A pirate keel mishapped, of fifty rowers :
In whose long dragon-stem, o'ergraven with runes,
Hight Sigefugl, a Roman beak pight fast.
Running, with three-square sail, other longship,
Like courser, that takes bit betwixt his teeth,
Reaved of the wind, fell on that pirate-board ;
And brake, even to the staves, her bank of oars
Seemed then, with opened seams, that keel should
sink ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Nor holp runes, graven on their rudder-blades,
Of victory, which should save the ship from loss.

Hurled Sigemund, the ship's earl, his renowned spear,
Knit on a thong, that never swerved before,
Hight Sigegar. It smote on the helmed front,
Of Ælianus, a captain of fleet-soldiers,
Fellow of Massa ; who, in Rome, whilere,
Was master of a school of gladiators.

Fell Ælian down, astonished, as one slain ;
Whence kindled Massa, who his fellow sworn,
Banning the pirates' barbared gods and FORTUNE
Invoking of great Rome ; he, in their keel,
Leapt, without targe ; and furious onset made ;
Wielding two swords, with mastery of fence,
And skill of stroke. And Massa eftsoon pierced
(Though many, round him, their tough shields had cast,)
With that in his right hand, the Scandian lord,
Pirate of immense stature and huge force ;
Who in scale-armour closed, that shines like ice !
With whom, he wrestling ; flung then, with foot-cast,
Him backlong ; and his targe, (smirched with his blood,
Which he, gainst him, upheld,) he cleft, with glaive ;
And carved his gorge. He, Sigemund, shield-swain, sith ;
And Segrim, steersman, slew : and were they of those
Which had them borne, o'er-proudly, at Camulodunum.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Rent Romans down their war-keel's gilded ensigns :
And Massa, (slain tall thanes which it defended,)
Took, then, those pirates' raven-standard, Tufa !
And yet the Almain's champions and boats' carles,
In the steer-stem, fight, for their lives, gainst Romans ;
Though darts rain, on them, of two Roman ships.

But seen their lord and Segrim, slain, and Tufa
Is taken ; and how are fallen their strongest champions,
In the forestem ; the pirates their life-days,
Like unto cable-roll outloost, that hangs,
All-ready, on a ship's pin ; perceive now ended.
They may not choose, but sup, to-night, with Ran,
Under the billows blue. The creekly shores,
Of their own coast, their eyes, the forelands fair,
No more ; nor Britain's rime-white cliffs, may view.

Disdaining sue that barbare folk, for life,
Wherein they, which were freeborn, should live thralls :
Intoned loud chant, to the Alfather Woden ;
They, all sudden, from broad belts, pluckt blades, at
once,
In furious sort, with these, themselves did pierce !
They, then, thus dying, heapmeal glide and start,
Like bloody take of herrings, in the water ;
Leaving opinion of their barbare worth,
To soldiers that admire, still, with pale faces !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Whilst those thus perish, with intrushing wave ;
Surging, (like funeral mound !) lo, long grey billow,
The pirate snake-keel reels, under those Romans !
That hasten, to their longship, turn aboard.
Founders Sigefugl ; and Massa, in the abysm,
And most who with him, in war-shining arms,
Sink ! He brays horribly ; and spuming his fierce
mouth,

Buffets, with force, the sliding brine, a moment,
But for all Romans might, with quonts and hooks,
And strife of oars, they could not Massa save !

Almains draw off. And when the ships of charge,
Whereof the most were scattered, and some lost,
Assembled be again, to Cæsar's fleet,
Claudius, vext with continual flux of heart ;
Seen now the dreadful rover sails, at length,
Sink under wave-brow of vast horizont,
Though little, yet, sun's burning wheel dismounts ;
From middle-height, gan, for his wine-cup, call ;
Drinks mulse, and gives commandment, Set on
meat.

Has Claudius Cæsar supped, on golden plate ;
And full of surfeit, drunken, on his bed,
Of purple ; whereon, like draff-sack, him heaved,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

His servants, routs. And as one newly dead,
No more recks he of death, nor of late dread
Of foes, nor drenching fathoms of salt deep.

Yet late, in this moonlight, have met with Romans,
Other long barbare prows : are Thorolf's ships,
Sailed from Thames-haven, and steering for Elbe's
mouth ;

Thence to return, with a new charge of victual.
On Rome's long galleys, full of drowsing soldiers,
That heavy row, those rush, with furious oars.
And as few dolphins scatter school of fish,
They Romans sperse, in the dim night and chace.

Dreams, drunken, Claudius ; and their dreadful yells,
Io triumphe ! shouts, him-seems, of Romans ;
Passing his triumph gates of sovereign Rome !
Loaden with spoils of the Britannic war.
But envying some wind-god, the glory of Thorolf ;
Night-mist now breathes, twixt them and Cæsar's ships,
And veiled the heavenly signs. Have those the moon,
But these not light to sail. Before their stems,
Seemed Almain shipswains loom, then, as white cliffs :
Wherefore their steersmen, fearing fall on land ;
They lie upon their oars ; but Romans pass.

By Cantion's Foreland, have the Romans' navy
Now safely sailed, and entered Thames' large mouth ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

(Shines, estuary, neath vast chamber of the stars.)
Like immense swany brood, lo, hundred ships !
Long rows, that Medway, Toliapis,¹ pass ;
Borne on a streaming tide. In night's mid-watch,
Sith Cæsar's pilots bring up in an hythe.
At clarion's sound, being anchors there outcast ;
Lie silent the longships, wherein there sleeps
The power of Rome ! At cockcrow, waking, Claudius,
Commands, by trumpet, That disembark his soldiers.

Who first, to land, descend, trench on that shore,
Then naval camp, foursquare. The immense
elephants,

Uneasy was, upon that oozy strand,
Expose ; and hardly achieved sea-weary Romans
Had all this busy travail, till late eve.
With wheels and pulleys, soldiers of the fleet ;
Sith, on Thames' tiding shelves, under their camps,
In double rows, draw up, the fleet's longships.

Then Cæsar offers, solemn sacrifice ;
A sow to Hercules : and to divine Julius,
He pours wine out, great father of his house.
And yet admire Rome's war-wont legionaries,
To see, in hostile land, none enemies !
Sith Claudius, leaving guard of his fleet-soldiers,

¹ Sheppey.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

One banner and six cohorts, legionaries,
To keep this naval camp ; with blowing trumps,
From Thames' salt meadows, marched, at morning red.

Came swift-borne tidings, to Caratacus,
At day, of Romans, that, in Thames, take land.

Riding on-high, in heaven, the white moon-goddess,
(Like mother of this silent starry night,)
Wide overshines that sullen water-face.
Toiled some poor fisher, nigh, in bascad boat,
That creeky place, to get his children meat,
Kruin, the maimed ; and having now outlayed
His wicker sales, he cast, with prayer to Nuth,
His net ; paid-out, and gan it now spread-forth ;
When infinite navy arrives, strange keels, strange
sails !

Then Kruin, softly, rowed, in his frail bark ;
And, in thick sedges, hid him, lurked for dread !
He watched an hour ; sith Thames'-sound, fearful,
passed.

But toucht his little skiff, to Kentish shore ;
He wakes there hamlet, with his shrill hulloa !
Men roused ; confused, run from their cabans forth,
To the salt-tiding river's oozy brinks ;
Deeming that wolves, or some boars' hunt, it was :

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

For chill, like reeds, that waver in the wind,
They stand ! When those have Kruin's saw heard out,
They help him in to land. Those straightway, choose
Then, two of theirs, strong runners on their feet,
This tiding, to bear forth, to warlord Caradoc.
As scudding bush, before some lenten blast,
(Yet night,) those leap forth, o'er fair field of Kent :
Sith, boldly swimming, they o'er Medway pass.

To a great village, soon, then, those arrive :
Whose old men, from their mouths, heard that war-word,
Send swiftest runners ; which towards Durovernum,
Speed, on their feet. Others they send, warflames
Kindle, on beacon-hill, calling to arms !
And heard from mouth, loud shouted through the fields,
To mouth, is the Land's-cry, as the day springs :
Which cometh, shortly, to the warlord's ears.

On Kent's white cliff, sits king Caratacus,
Mongst long-haired, glast-stained, captains. Leanness is,
In all their looks, and cast down Caradoc's face.
A dread long night, them seems, to live ; were sweet
Short death ! for other, earlier, tiding brought :
The army is cast away, with Antethrigus !

He duke, when Thames Caratacus overpassed,
Continued, with his power, nigh that ford head,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Two days : but Aulus, levied from that place ;
Had marched and pitched again, towards Verulamion.
Now when had Aulus tidings, through his scouts ;
That minished is, by much, the island host,
He certain Gauls sent out, men of his trust ;
Which should make semblant, come to Britons' camp,
Of treacherous mind, to Rome-wards and the legate ;
Feigning Rome's yoke, (this ignominy, and servitude!)
All Gauls, alike, would shake from off their necks.

Lo, led those Gauls, before duke Antethrigus ;
Who sits, like a grim boar, with woad-stained face :
Unto whom few lords, at new light of the gods,
Be come to council : and the hero gives
Ear, to those Gauls' lewd tale ; as that, the morrow
Ill-starred day is for Romans, day wherein,
Defeated twice of Gauls, her consuls slain,
Perished great Roman armies ; day, when fame
Is, (those affirm,) lie drunken Rome's great gods !

Wherefore, when Romans shall much dread to fight,
Britons provoke them forth. Gauls then, would pass
To them, from the two wings. Of Antethrigus,
Persuade those the high heart, to Britain's loss !
He, then, the Roman-Gauls dismissed, with gifts.

His spies returned, the same day, those, to Aulus,
Relate ; how Thames Caratacus had o'erpassed,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

With part of Britons' host. They few caterfs,
This side found ; and them leads another duke.

And was, with hasting feet, to Britons' camp,
New power of East-men, for whom Caradoc sent ;
And not few glast-stained bands, from the South
March ;

Arrived at Thames, by night, to Antethrigus ;
Whose confidence was, thereby, much more, increased.

At day, sent Aulus, to his legions' trains,
Word, that they seem, disordinately, to march ;
As who remove in fear, with haste and noise.

Whereof, when tiding brought to Antethrigus ;
He deemed this the occasion he had sought,
And loud commands, blow up Icenian warhorns ;
That march his army and pass before them chariots ;
But left, unread, the omens of his gods !

Icenians foremost sally, a wood of spears :
Then swart Silures, strange Belerions ;
And those stout hill-folk, whom king Kynan leads,
(Proud warriors those of mountuous Venedot.¹)
Then Golam, with sea-dwelling Durotriges.
Now all these hastily marching, from broad leas,
Of Thames, as who pursue, approach the Romans.

¹ North Wales.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Aulus feigned flight, unto green hills nigh hand,
Whereas, who are first come, gin *vallum* cast.
But Antethrigus, sent, before him, chariots,
It caused, by noblest Britons, be proclaimed,
In the enemy-army's hearing, to allies
Of Rome; Who yield their arms, and pass to
 Britons,
Should have both saved their lives: and
 who, in Britain,
Would dwell, should ploughland, sheep and
 house receive.

Behold then, many treacherous Gauls outrun !
Feigning who bows fling from them, and who spears.
Stretch suppliant hands those, as they swiftly run !

Get them to hindward, of his host, commands,
Loud, Antethrigus ; that helm-clad, in harness,
Leads up long glittering wave of shielded breasts.

Then legions turn, in triple ranks, their face :
And battle joined, the first impetuous brunt,
They easily all do sustain of blue caterfs ;
On whom fall, from an higher ground, their darts.

From Britons' hindward, sounds then confuse shout !
Those Gauls, which fugitives seemed, assail that part ;
Uncertain, yet, to most, what thing men shout !
Whence dread the more ; and wrying back their necks,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Ingenuous Britons, with poised spears, forget
To smite, or, with shields, fence their naked breasts.
Gauls drawn out glaives, conveyed beneath their
cloaks,

Have treacherously fallen, on the people's backs!

And yet strong battle wavered, on hill's breast ;
When bleak-faced Fear ; one of the bounden spirits,
Whom heavenly gods embayed, in wall of frost ;
But broken had, to-night, that caitif forth,
Transfiguring his vast shape, to winter cloud,
From heaven-dwelling gods, himself to hide ;
Gan shoot, like icicles, down his unseen shafts,
On the blue naked tribes ; whose bodies pierced
Are suddenly of a strange unkindly cold !
Britons recoil, then, sore amazed their hearts ;
So that they fall on their own battle-chariots ;
Which part o'erthrown, with madding teams, their own
Woad-stained bands do o'errun ! These, that had been,
For Britons' safety, now become their bane.

Rector of scythe-carts, most expert of Britons,
To manage warlike steeds and painted chariots,
Fell Rutupiæn young lord, Heroidel, slain ;
In that he arrived, in strength of some war-god,
Swift-teamed, before the main of warlike carts.
The hero, for he would not urge his steeds,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

In Britons' press, nor more might wend his war-
cart,

Would have leapt down to battle on his feet.

Was then, an arrow attained him, in the nape ;
Sped from a Gaulish bow-string. Passed, from part
To part, the shot ; and like as royal erne,
Whom thrilled, under the wing, hath hunter's shaft,
Plumbs from the loft ; so fell, from chariot-beam,
The hero down : and trodden on bruised grass,
Mongst the mean people, was, of flying feet.
And overdrive his own hooked wheels, alas,
The dying prince ; and spurned his steeds' bronze
hooves :

On whom, (now tangled in the reins,) anon,
They overthrew his windy rushing scythe-cart.

And taken had prince Heroidel a young wife ;
Little ere that coming-in of fatal legions,
At the fond nod of drivelling Cæsar Claudius ;
Bright Erdilla, flower of noble maidens all,
And daughter to rich lord of Kent. Her left
He enwombed, with fruit of happy marriage.

And is, alas ! Heroidel's this brayed face,
This the duke's front ? ah, whose ringed golden locks,
Thus rolled in bloody dust ! was this the prince
Of Rutupiæ, who leapt to battle-cart,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

At call of the warlord and Dumnoveros ;
In stature, like a god, in sounding harness ?
Whom, o'er a fourth part of the Britons' chariots,
Had set Caratacus, sire, to fight with Aulus.

Is this that helm and front, as Camulus ;
Which Erdilla's gentle hands, with plumes of erne,
Dight, and whereon she girt the golden band,
Of noble charioteers ? the bearded lips
Are these, where last farewell of her spouse-lips,
She smiling-weeping kissed ; when, from his hall,
She brought forth his cart-quivers, filled with darts ?
And to her lord's forearm, his nimble shield ;
And the ivory-helved whip took to his right hand !

He leapt to scythe-cart, and the supple reins
Shook, not then looking back, on his young wife ;
And though sore longed his heart. At their lord's
voice,

Wherein seemed, in hoarse sorrow, her name sound,
His generous steeds rushed from the sounding porch,
Panting to battle ; and cried the prince, Farewell !
And would she have cried again ; Heroidel speed
Thee, and save, in warlike field, the holy
gods !

But voice remained shut-up, in her dear chest,
In anguish ; presage, ah, of coming ill !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Yet running, like to wailful plover, cried
She after him, a space ; last, losing sense,
When seen, like little powderous cloud, the prince ;
Who foremost rides, mongst Cantion's pomp of chariots,
She, of her maidens, was borne in, dismayed.

Now Erdilla, sitting in her maidens' bower ;
(For enters she, as morning ray, no more,
Heroidel's hall,) sighs, in herself, and weeps ;
For spouse, and that which lives, unborn, in her :
And daily vows makes, to her saviour goddess ;
That might she a man-child, like his hero sire,
Bear. Soft her women, which her sit before ;
To spin, to weave, the raiment of his house,
Of line and wool ; whisper and weep, for ruth ;
In that they look on their loved lady's grief !
But she marks naught ; so is her thought distract !
Whilst, from her long-lashed eyes, fall burning drops.

She a sampler broiders, all with silver wire ;
Hoar sea-cliff's image, on fair Cantion shore.
There was repulsed, Cingetorix, (her grandsire,
One of four kings of Kent,) great Julius' ships.
Was there, her lord, her love, did meet with her,
In the truce-month. Her needle she applies,
Gainst that glad day, wherein she hopes the prince,
Her spouse, come home, with famous victory,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Should, mongst his lords, arrayed in this bright weed,
Sit feasting, in high hall of Rutupæia :
But, ah, he untimely dead, may turn no more.
In tunic stiff, with dusty sweat and gore,
Of mastery of brave steeds and battle-chariots,
He all unmindful lies. Foul ravens' beaks,
Shall fight, for spoil, o'er him, of his blue eyes !
Craking, and beating their stiff sheeny wings.

And, in one chariot, with Heroidel, slain,
Young Tulamor fell, fell pierced by Roman javelin ;
Brother of Erdilla. Tempting him to save,
Golug, renowned, called the Black-hand-of-war,
Was himself slain ; and generous Serpiol,
Leapt forth from his caterf, Belerion captain.
Hemmed-in the hero, of immense enemies' press,
Prevailed not his great force. When might, no more,
He his bloody lance, which slain hath many Gauls,
Advance ; him flocking horsemen thrilled with spears.

Derwain, to succour ; or, which he had vowed,
(His entire friend,) to give, for him, his life ;
With scythe-carts' brunt, brake through Gauls' power
of horse :

But in the jaws, a Gaulish lance him pierced,
Over his hide-dight targe. Tumbled from cart,
He astonished gaped ; and dying vomits blood.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Silurian champion passed by, in men's view,
(Is this one of great name, in his West March ;)
Driving foes, like a flock, before his glaive !
This morn, had Uthol sworn, in battle-rage,
Which breathed in him war-fury, (wherefore bound
His helm, of shining broad oak-leaves, is seen ;)
That would he slay, mongst thickest enemies,
Forth, without pause ; till he himself fell slain.

Like some tall hoy, that strides before East-wind ;
Deep battle-ranks he wades. Morgallion ! calls,
Hark, his great voice. (He wist not that proud warrior,
Whom he, his father's son, himself, in place,
Of a dear son, had nourished on his knees ;
And skill of arms, in his first manhood, taught,
Is fallen, already ; even where rushed forth, of
soldiers,
Great shielded press !) Thick fledged, lo, with Gauls'
shafts,

Is now, of bull's hard hide, the hero's targe,
That seems a grove. As robust foster hews
His billets in a wood, this champion fares.
He shields and plate rives, on the brazen chests
Of little-statured, swart-strange Roman soldiers.

At many's cry, that call on him, to save
Heroidel's corse, he, turned him to that part ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Then seemed some craig, that loosed of strong night-tempest,

Down-leaping from hill's crest, to plain beneath,
Through thicket breaks, and sith a shelter is ;
So scattered he, before him, Gauls and Romans.

But, in that point, being come his hour, from earth,
Forewrit in the eternal stars, to pass ;
Unwilling, him forsook strong Camulus.
Smote slinger of the Gauls, then, his helmed front.
Reeling his sense, astonished at the stroke,
He fell to knee ; and stayed him on his hand.
And in that posture, running Rome's allies,
Him pierced Batavian swordsman of huge force ;
And battle raged, round Uthol's bloody corse !

BOOK XV

ARGUMENT

ANTETHRIGUS' host is smitten at Thames. Romans march forth then towards Verulam. The dukes of scattered Britons are come together, in a sacred grove.

Caratacus and kings on Kentish cliffs. Good counsel of Dumnoveros. Britons march to Troynovant. Horsemen bring tidings, that Caer Verulam is taken. Generous oath of prince Marunus. The Roman conquest of Verulam. Claudius now marched from Thames' mouth; and Aulus journeys to meet him. Legions with Aulus pass the Lea. They come to Claudius.

Caratacus withdraws the Briton army to Camulodunum. Manannan journeys to Mona. Cartismandua. The North Britons' armed powers, marching with Velaunos, come down to Ouse. Cartismandua is seen approaching to Camulodunum. The next day arrives Velaunos' army. Ergund, lord of Mona.

Briton kings offer sacrifice. Warlike counsel of Cartismandua. She herself goes forth, to beset a woody place: whence her young warriors fall out upon the legions, which are marching by night. Vespasian saves the army. The Romans draw now nigh to Camulodunum. Their war-towers and engines. War-hags summon from hell the demon Wrath. Cartismandua, among the kings, rails on her lord Venutius. Vellocatus protests his innocency: but, gone forth from the council, he slays himself. Found of the watch, he is borne again to the town. Grief of Cartismandua. The kings' sacrifice on the wall.

BOOK XV

WAS Cerix, mongst Silures, sore beset ;
Though ward about him hardy champions' shields.
Maglos, uneath, like mighty ram, yet Romans
Rebuts. His brother's peril neither knows ;
Nor germain might, of germain, receive aid.

Rector of war-carts, kinsman of the queen,
Is fallen young Brentyn, from his bloody chariot.
This night-time, had he driven, from fresh leas ;
Where, pastured, three days, were his war-worn steeds.
Duke of a thousand, riding in swift scythe-carts,
He, at dawn, drew nigh, to vex the Romans' march.

Then glittering seen, this battle afar off,
Led Brentyn mainly forth : and hurled on Romans'
Light-armed, strewed much field with their carcasses !
But falling, now, on cohorts of a legion ;
There many teams were pierced : and the first chariots,
Being overthrown, was soon, that violent javelin,
Where thickest strife raged, pierced the hero's chest.
And to the mould rushed Brentyn ! like as falls

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Tall pine, by lightning rent, on wind-scourged cliff;
And lay full still, dead body without breath.

Dungannon, the old, fell, spread his hardy arms,
With bracelets girt of gold, to stay the flight :
Stout lord was this, mongst Kynan's Ordovices.
In that he, father, each, by name, rehearsed
The young men's fathers, he, by Gaulish shaft,
Was pierced. Off-smitten Dungannon's head, a knight
It bare forth, on his lance, ruth to all Britons !
Madron and Berriol, his oath-brother's sons,
Fighting, amongst who foremost, to their aid,
Called their king Kynan ; lest were spoiled his corse.
But could not Kynan, Hammeraxe, then break,
Of spears, that hurtling press ! They, eftsoon, both
Fell on him slain. Cigfran, with sheeprich lord
Cadoc, and Aerg fell, Demetans, in that place.

Prince Kondilan, when now certain Rufus Cuspius,
A cohort's first centurion, he had pierced ;
In that to gird-off his helmed head, he stoopt,
Him overran the triple-rankéd legion.
Stout duke he was of thousand Western men.

Fell Guelti and Devron, lords of Troynovant,
And Morchel, leading, (white-locked magistrate,)
Young warriors, archers, in his battle-chariot.
Blue Britons, clustered round their reeling ensigns,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Yet turned their face, at shout of Antethrigus !
To strive, again, caterfs, with phalanxed Romans.
They woad-stained, naked, fight, with plate-clad
soldiers !

Are those Vespasian's thick-ranked faithful legion.

Then, like as thresher, in the winter moons,
Smites stubble, in a barn, a long-haired warrior,
Gormael ; who sometime dwelled, under blood-ban,
(An exile from North parts,) with Antethrigus ;
One held in honour, for his matchless force ;
Down-leapt, mongst stout Icenians, from shrill war-
cart ;

Helms hews, bursts plate on panting breasts of Romans.

Gainst Flavius' thick-set ranks, another duke,
Trevorion fights, whose dune is in wide heath ;
Whence fenny Ouse slides, tardy, to salt deep.
Is fame, could this outstrip the flying hart :
Seemed glittering chariot wheel, his burning glaive.
But, now, on his long heavy bull's-hide shield,
Stumbled the hero's foot ; and slides his heel,
In slough of gore. In-thrusting, with strong pulse,
A stout centurion, midst the belly, smote,
With glaive ; and pierced the iron the prince's
bowels.

He fell, like half-hewed tree, drawn down of ropes.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Asnodin nigh him fell, lord of dune-cliff,
A pleasant summer-land of Durotriges.

In Antethrigus' arm, is two men's pith.
And Romans he hath slain, from his swift chariot,
In heaps. Yet now he might sustain, uneath ;
That Britons fly not, whom gin legions break.
On lofty steed, of Roman Gaul, his hand
Then slew, he mounts ; and cries to stout Icenians,
Hold fast ! whilst he recomforts the caterfs.
He, wheresoe'er he rides, finds wounded dukes,
Deformed caterfs, uncaptured chariot routs ;
Whose lords, he calls, in vain, for are they dead :
Whence all dismayed blue Britons' warlike breasts ;
Gin Gauls, with rushing spears, them override.

Returned ; when now Icenians he dispersed,
Beholds, by new assault and poise of legions ;
He alone, would desperate, then, have hurled on
Romans,
So he abhors day's light, so covets death's
Great Night, which should him hide. He would
might split
This mould, and hell-deep open, neath his feet
And let him sink, whereas men's bandied spirits,
Have rest, at length ! War-druids, with mystic chant,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And prophecy old, (as they allege, of Samoth,
Or Sarron, Star,) allay the hero's mood ;
Even whilst, each moment, they convert their faces ;
To see, if come not some new course of chariots.

Is broken the East-men's host, into two parts.
In this one, Dibon, gathered main of spears,
Them bound, with hasty oath of up-cast palms !
To turn again, and fight against the Romans.
He, in thick battle-wedge, with knitted shields,
Them leads. And all that cometh to their hands,
Romans, aye and Britons, (those which turn their
backs !)

They spare not smite. Thus Britons' cumbered
chariots

They save, though many fall. Last, hurled dart, pierced
Dibon, twixt belly and ribs ; where mortal is
The bitter stroke. Groaning, he fell down, glorious !
Yet looked that dying champion, from the earth,
Like adder, which some cart-wheel bruised, to death ;
And bade, with dying breath, fight on, gainst Romans !

Swift scythe-carts, those of the third course, which
Caradoc

Sent out, to waste before the legions' march ;
Yestreen, together, squadroned, by fresh streams,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Where sprouts much tender herb. At morning red,
Beichiad, like Belin, for his shining locks,
Upleapt, in glittering arms, in battle-cart :
And he commands, instinced of a god,
All hastily drive, to ford of Thames, their chariots.
Standing, in war-cart, with aparted feet,
Bowed bodies, o'er their reins, and intent looks ;
Behold, of Britain's Isle, the noblest youth,
That manage steeds, and incite, with loud shout !
Steeds that, from plashéd gore, were, lately, washed,
And dust, in the clear brook. On the yoke-beams,
Diffused are their long weld¹-stained gracious
manes.

In every cart, ride two companion-warriors :
And each hath, o'er his warlike shoulders, cast,
Some goodly weed of shining needle-work.
Might seem the young men drave, (so each pair
vies
In course, in glittering arms,) to joyous feast !
Yet nigher viewed, bear war-bruised shields the most ;
Nor few have hurts : seen fretted are their carts ;
And draw them, oft, unlike, and leany steeds.
Nor, (were they numbered,) more than an half-part,
Of them rest, o'er whom captains set king Caradoc !

¹ Dyers'-weed ; wild mignonette.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Now were they ridden, with jumping wheels, few
leagues ;
When, seeing much powderous cloud, before the sun,
They, drawn the supple reins up to their breasts,
Halt. Riders, leapt-down, fix their scythes and
hooks,
Of glittering bronze. Shouts Beichiad, from his
chariot ;
Few words. Then put on all, with ivory whips !
Now those approaching ; with some fugitives
meet ;
Of whom, they require tidings. Camulus, then,
New force infused, in their young valorous breasts ;
And adds new wind, to their well-pastured steeds ;
So that, like tempest-driven waves, they rush,
In full career. Uneath, their shrill swift chariots,
Seem touch the mother-bosom of the ground.
Like hawks, they stoop, on thick pursuing Romans.
Outrunning, to the yokes, on their cart-beams,
They hurl down darts ; or lightly leapt to ground,
Fighting on foot, they fall, on blood-stained soldiers.
But seeing new cloud arrive of Britons' chariots,
With iron glittering tires and naves of bronze ;
Bade sound, recall, duke Aulus ! Halt his light
Armed, from pursuing ; heavy legions halt.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Yet only, of part, was that commandment heard ;
For immense din, to heaven, of battle-noise.

Great Antethrigus, captain of the Britons,
This seen, assayed, with new grave voice, of warhorns !
To call again, reorder his caterfs.

But they, like wind-cast shocks, in Autumn field,
Lie dead : and scattered, like leaves blown forth,
And without shields, the rest fly fugitive.

He, duke of the woad-stained, on his war-gods ;
Which found, at need, no saviours, loud complains.
Dies any, and he were clad in adamant,
Whom Calad smites, his violent renowned glaive ;
Which cleaves, in desperate hand, both iron and bronze.
Nor Calad swerved, which now a Roman knight
Slew, and in men's dumb seeing, which shrink, for
dread,

Severing the brutish head, clave his steed's nape.
Hurt now by javelin's shot, his own war-steed
Sinks : lights the Icenian duke. In his war-rage,
Roars Antethrigus, like wild bull in forest !

In field, is fallen the flower of Briton warriors :
Around great Antethrigus, fall his peers.
For when Gauls' horsemen knew, that he, it was,
(Whom would those fence ; whose head, unhelmed, for
heat,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Some blossomed bush seems of the island furze !)
Who to-day Britons leads ; all hurl their javelins,
Greedy to reave his life. With thick pressed shields,
Those rush, then, in to take the prince, alive.

But seen, from far, his peril, valorous Kynan
Hath, Hammeraxe : and he, though hurt himself ;
And lost much of his Ordovices' folk ;
With strong extreme effort, of men and scythe-carts,
On gods loud calling ! bet back Gauls and soldiers.
Kynan adjures him, hardly snatcht, from death,
Mount hastily in chariot, with him, save his life ;
And give not so great vaunt, of war-king's death,
To Romans. Hardly yields duke Antethrigus ;
For, erewhiles, these strong lords, in Britons' wars,
Twixt East and West March, had been enemies !

They twain, now looking towards the Britons' flight ;
Behold, how scattered far the armed caterfs,
Now in wide field are spersed, like water-drops,
To the deep woods ; and little hope is left,
Gather again blue Britons, to their ensigns.
Nor they, for powder might discern and mist,
How set, on Romans, Beichiad's rushing war-carts ;
Nor wherefore legions halt, now, in pursuit.

They grieved, then, drave apart, to a void place ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Where covered thicket-hollow is from view ;
Such as, whence wont outrush swift ambushed scythe-
carts,
Gainst marching legions. There light those great
captains,
With drooping looks, and fastened on the ground ;
Womb-god, which seems to-day devour her sons !
And drink their blood, which fostered had her paps !
They leaned, on their long spears, and the teams'
yokes,
That seem to mourn, hanging their long-maned necks ;
And other lords, there now together met ;
With few hoarse words, hold hasty parliament.
They stare, each, upon other ! and want breath.

Of certain druid, which ran by, fugitive,
They hear, (ah ! might forfend it holy gods !)
Is fallen the generous son of Moelmabon.
Fell godlike Maglos, in one battle-cart,
With Cerix, who, beside his germain, drave ;
When broken, that was never broken erst,
Silures' battle, was by new and last
Assault of shielded men, of Geta's legion.
And Maglos peer was of Caratacus ;
Next him, in beauty, esteemed and warlike worth.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Gainst whom, he saw, (cried that distraught war-druid,)

Advance, like to tall ash, strange battle-god,
Whose lance some ship-mast seemed of Troy-novant.

Thus hastily spake that druid, and passed forth.

When fell upon the Romans, Beichiad's scythe-carts ;

They slew men runners, mingled with Gauls' horse
They set then on who foremost expedite cohorts,
Which Britons, on that horn, had turned to flight.
With their hook-wheels ; like field of shining corn,
They reaped them down, alive : and, in their midst,
Men that bare ensigns, killed they and centurions.

Now dying, o'er the field, the sun divine,
Chariots run hither, as new rushing flood ;
Whom Fythiol leads : and these have stayed the flight ;
(He, valorous seed of the Icenian gods :)

So have they troubled the pursuing Romans.
Smoke, with foam-dripping bits, now, his tired steeds ;
They bloody-stained, do, men and teamed chariots,
Lo, halt, before the great duke Antethrigus !
But woad-stained dead lie, strewed forth, many a league,
Pasture of fowl and beasts of hill and wood.
Great was that victory of the Roman legate !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

These things, with sorrow-huskéd voice, had told,
Of comfort, empty, man with war-stained weed ;
With travail, lean, and all deformed with grief ;
In whom, uneath, rests kindly life and breath :
(But like to one on whom look angry gods,
Is Redoc, named in praise of his swift feet.)
Ere-yester, Redoc ran, from field of fight.

He, the king's smith, at Verulam, and shield-wright,
Was teller, oft, in king Cunobelin's hall,
Of old war-tales, which wont the royal ear,
To please. Whilst hearkened all, to Redoc's voice ;
Wax cold the princes' hearts : for that is sooth,
They wot well, which this wearily doth rehearse.
But thou, O Britain's Muse, recite the rest !

The morrow of that sun, gainst eve, wherein
Britons were vanquished, with much blood, have

Romans,
(Buried who fell, and spoiled the island-dead,
Of bracelets, collars, arms and seemly weed,)
At moon-rise marched, which now hath filled her horns ;
Towards Catuvelaunian royal Verulam.
Before them, fugitives to Cunobelin's town,
Came in ; and entered, with them, Fear of Romans.
Of dukes, which, that day, were, with Antethrus :

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

The more be gathered, to sequestered grove ;
Where holy well-bourn is, and sacred holm.
Come the most warlike Britons, to them, there,
Which scaped that overthrow. Behold not dead,
Cerin and Maglos, nurselings of the gods !
But they, sore-wounded, lie. Their servants made
Them have fresh shadows, of sweet hazel boughs :
And, lo, there booths, of other warlike lords.

Hurt be the most ; and sorry is the plight
Of all that, lost their wains, find meat uneath.
Halt's swart Belerion king, lo, on his spear,
Deceit. Him Golam saved, when, (both his steeds
Slain,) on his iron crest, he pight, from cart ;
And his bruised trunk leapt, on the gory heath,
His shoulder broke. From midst thick strife, uptook
The swooning king, in his shrill justling chariot,
With a hard assay, the lord of Moridunion :
And laid him, borne out of the battle-press,
And bound his wounds, under elm's freshing shade.
Wherefore have swart Belerions crowned his brows,
With holy misselden. Lo, great-statured duke,
Idhig of tawny herdsman of the hills ;
Gored in the side of spear's thrust, Demetan druid
Cures ; and his wound foments, with sacred vervain.
Though wounded early, of shaft-shot, Marunus,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

In his shield-arm, he ceased not fight, in chariot :
A leech, with certain salves, it mollifies ;
Murmuring his idle spells, in the wind's ears.
This eve, Marunus will to Troynovant, ride ;
To meet with Thorolf. Iddon, of great Verulam,
Old warlike lord, who late returned from Rome,
Lies wounded, in the hip, of javelin-cast ;
When had he bet back, thrice, the Gaulish horse ;
Leading strong band of old men warriors,
In his own cart ; that would not cede to Romans.
But in the battle, was not noble Kowain.
He holds the seas, in king Duneda's ships.
Three oak-crowned warriors laid there, newly dead,
Behold : one, (omen strange !) on his helmed face,
Gin bury moldwarps, in the leafy earth.

Under oak-bough, upon wild mighty stone,
Of some old hero's tomb, sits Antethrigus ;
Like to great drooping erne. For little slept
The hero hath, and tasted little meat ;
And hang his beard uncombed and yellow locks,
Sith day of battle rout. By Britons' duke,
White-headed Dulas, this grove's sacred druid,
Stands ; ready, lay swift hand, on the lord's mouth
Should he, in woodness of his mind's amaze,
As they unrighteous were, blaspheme high gods.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Nor Moelmabon, nor divine Manannan,
Were in that field. Both ridden to Durovernium,
Were, from Thames' ford, consult with Dumnover,
And many hold, through lacking their wise read,
That journey lost. And who, a young lord dead,
Yonder, lies, under shield, in Almain weed,
Was Friedemund ; dead on his comely face !
Cheruscan earl, of the great house of Brennus,
Kinsman of Thorolf ; for whose love he sailed,
With his own prow, five keels, to island Britain ;
Seeking war-praise, abroad, in his first arms.

Mild-hearted warrior ; and for such, held dear
Earl Friedemund was, of all duke Thorolf's Almains.
Parting, him, sick, had left that prince, mongst Britons ;
With twelve-score spears of his, by Thames' green
brinks ;

And him commended, to the island kings.

Rose Friedemund up, from bed of languishment,
In fatal day, when led forth Antethrigus.
Nor the ethling valiant stroke, for Land of Brennus,
Might smite : nor, walling their stiff shields him round ;
His champions and house carles might long defend, ..
Though stout, their lord, gainst weight of rushing
soldiers.

A Gauish shaft pierced Friedemund, in the bowels.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

He yet drew breath ; when Almain saved him forth,
Borne on his targe. Last, in well-pit, they cast,
When might they not thence scape,) Friedemund's
warm corse !

Which sith uptook his servants ; and have brought,
Hither ; in their land's wise, when this sun sets,
To bury. O'er him make Almain, now, lament ;
Who sacred, (weapon-slain,) to Woden god.

Much confused voice, is, in that sacred grove ;
Where men, of many tribes, of unlike speech,
And painted shields and warlike ensigns, lodge.
Now washed with water of that holy well,
The most, with gathered herbs, cure their green
wounds ;

(Comfrey and orpine, healing setewell,
Valerian, golden rods and galingale.)
Men sleep, in shadow laid of antique boughs,
Numbed with cold juice of darnel, kex and dwale ;
Wound-worts, best gifts of the immortal gods !

Sits, on hoar-headed windy cliff of Kent,
Which looketh forth towards Gaul, Caratacus,
In the wind and the rain. His lords, hold ; o'er
whom hangs
Immane new cloud of ruin ! parliament :

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And, with dark grief, astonished are all hearts,
And void of read. He gazes on grey waves,
As one on whose soul weighs dark direful dream !
Few proffer speech : nor hope nor comfort is,
By sea or land. Of Britons' warlike youth,
Men sigh ; were, in Thames' battle, half-part
lost !

And tarries yet to send, in aid, North March.

Ah ! and nów, stroke upon stroke ! the warlord hears,
Romans' rife sails have entered, in Thames' mouth.
Before him, panting, lo, those messengers stand !

King Dumnoveros, in the midst, uprose ;
Whose joints stiff, with old aches, and like is his
Courbe shoulder to bent bow : the word, nathless,
In day of trouble, weighs of his ripe lips,
With a caterf. Send, Dumnoveros reads,
Now chosen lords, on speedy wheels of chariots,
Enquire ; Why come not yet Velaunos' powers.
Thereto consents divine Manannan's voice ;
Consent all hearts, and king Caratacus.

Cadoc, Dumnonian, Verulam lord, Ruellan ;
These two, on whom then lot, among them, falls,
They send from Dover cliffs. Each, with his druid,
Eftsoons, parts forth : for whom, lifting their hands,
Make Britons their fond vows, shut-up their hearts,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

To heavenly gods ! Then, hastily, levied camps ;
The warlord leads, with loud trumps, forth, Kent's
 scythe-carts.

His foot, from those white windy cliffs, remove,
To march back, day and night, with cumbered hearts ;
Till Thames' wide ford, by Troynovant, they might pass.

The third eve, to that river's bank, arriving ;
They, nightlong, in thick battles, overwade.
Is hardly the sun risen, when warlord Caradoc
Offers swart bull, an whole burned sacrifice,
At old grave-mound, of Corwen and great Brennus :
Omen of ill ! uneath, might kindle priests,
Their cloven, hastily laid up, dewy, wood !

In that were seen, disordinately, to approach,
Three horsemen, like as who flee forth for life !
Each, on his steed's mane droops, for weariness.
Men help them, soon, from trembling steeds, to light,
Before the kings. The men are Catuvelaunians ;
Which cry, with little left in them, of voice ;
Is taken great Verulam ! and there failed their
 breath.

King Caradoc, pluckt the garland from his head,
And the wreathed gold, from off his royal neck ;
And bracelets strewed forth, on the meadow's grass !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Nathless, by reason of their former jars,
(Heard that cold tiding,) covert pleasance creeps,
In some lords' breasts! But leapt, eftsoons, Marunus,
To chariot, generous, in his sounding harness;
And, like a god, upstanding, the hurt prince,
(So comely he is,) above much Britons' press;
His word spake to king Caradoc, with great voice;
And were, with spears of only Troynovant,
He would redeem Caer Verulam, from strange
Romans!

Likewise sware Golam, and the prince of Almain.

Hark! as not blown of mortals, sound iron throats,
Of warhorns. At that portent, warriors' hearts
Leap in their breasts. Lords run to the caterfs.
And, lo, those which came, weary, from long march,
Stand ready, impatient, in tall battailous ranks!

To royal chariot, leaps Caratacus;
Strong of a spirit which inspire the gods.
That seen, his captains mount. To Camulodunum,
Fenced with banks and towered gates, the warlord leads;
(City inexpugnable, in old Britons' wars.)
Wide, follow their kings forth, the blue caterfs.

In four-wheel wains, are borne those wayworn wights,
Scaped out of Verulam. Come again their spirits,
Yet trembling, bleak of hew, to warlord Caradoc,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Their king, who, with them, questions, in the way ;
They answer make, how cast victorious legions,
Their *vallum*, by slow-streaming Ver, and trenched
It deep and wide. Soldiers, then, having crates
Wrought and bound faggots ; under knitted shields,
Approached, Cunobelin's dyke, by night-time, filled :
And, hewed down alders, in the river's mead,
They timbered mighty towers. At third day's end,
Those over-looked already the dune walls.
Were most-part striplings left therein, in arms,
With old spent wights : all men of likely age,
As known unto the king, in the king's wars,
Being then in field. Those rammed-up Verulam gates,
Nathless, did man, wide-round, the city walls ;
And many sieging Romans slew, beneath.

But come fifth dawn, in twilight and thick mist,
Blown from the river meads, with ladders, soldiers
Made sudden assault ; and taken was, in a moment,
The wall. Descended Romans, in the town,
There cruel slaughter made, of age and youth ;
Killing all whom they met : sith Verulam's streets,
They put to sack, till eve. Young men and maids,
All which they saved, were bound then to be sold.
(Permitted, and had longtime promised Aulus,
Spoil of the royal dune, unto his cohorts.)

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

When the long baleful light, of that day's sun,
Was ended ; drunken of the Britons' mead,
Soldiers reeled, with lewd songs, in Verulam streets.
They yelled, like wolves ! Shrieks then of wives and
 maids,

Outraged, by their own burning thresholds' light !
And wretched Britons, dying, cursed their gods ;
So rich in heaven, that offerings of poor wights,
Despise ; nor heed men's immense miseries !

Sounded the last repair, gainst midnight, Romans :
But not ere few remained, yet hidden, Britons,
In their foul luxury and drunkenness, had oppressed
Many abhorréd Roman legionaries.
In the night's dread, those die an enemy's death !
Was, in the market place, and murk cross streets,
Then set strong watch ; and standing at the gates,
Did tall Batavians keep Cunobelin's court ;
For Aulus so commanded, as wherein
Were all their chiefest captives stived that night,
Under the tower of the king's treasure-house.

At day, and when now portsale should begin,
Of comely young men, virgins, noble wives ;
Cast up the bronze-dight, great nailed, oaken
 doors,
Whereas, since yester, were those captives pent ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Behold, all lacking needful nourishment,
Languished : mongst whom were lying many dead !
For not few striplings, not few noble maids,
Beating their golden heads, on the flint stones,
Slew themselves, that night ; and so scaped from
Romans.

And now hath Claudius journeyed from Thames'
frith,
Two days ; but foundered, in the fenny reeds,
Were two, his great Numidic, elephants lost.
Gauls have and Roman knights, lost, likewise, steeds.
Now, from short march, he measured his third camp ;
Will wait, there, coming of his legate Aulus.

And he, left Roman sick, in conquered Verulam,
With garrison ; is marched forth, to meet with Claudius ;
Who, in Thames' mouth, he hears, now gone to land.
Lo, glittering trains of his victorious legions !
But, for the field lies open, where they pass ;
Nor wots he, where became Caratacus ;
He, each eve, lodged, fenced with a nine-foot bank,
(Which, stranger scars, yet, in our soil, remain !)

Then, to vast salty tide, his army arrives ;
Whence merchant Troynovant, beyond, appears ;
Which, he omitting, pitched, at poplar grove,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

That sanctuary is of Lud, the river's god :
Place, where discern the heavens, in age to come,
Be built, the Mart of men, ANOTHER ROME.

Thence, to wide fleet, Rome's legions be come down ;
Where flows out, shole, to Thames, soft-streaming Lea,
Bordered with sallows, whose deep fenny brinks.
And, lo, a remnant of blue scattered Britons,
Of Antethrigus, hold that further shore !
And though this Summer day be young, blows Aulus
Halt ; till to-morrow, here should rest his cohorts.
But fallen the night, he sends out tall Batavians,
Well-nigh five hundred men, to overswim
That oozy sound, on udders,¹ with their arms :
And promised meed, if ford, of them, were found ;
Where might, at low ebb, pass his heavy cohorts.

Those enter, with their floats, at the moonrise,
(Encouraging, in Almain tongue, each other,)
The stream. To Britons, that keep watch, beyond ;
Those seemed some harts, that wont, from Epping
forest,
By night-time, overswim, in Summer season.
But, angry, river-gods, send water-sprites ;
Them to confound. Following whose flickering brands,
The most, on shelves, fell unwares and vast flats ;

¹ *Utres* : blown-up bags of leather.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Whereas, their fellows calling, long, in vain,
Their limbs stick fast ; and drencheth them, ere dawn,
Inflowing tide. Being few, like worms, crept forth,
From slough ; those found, then, of fierce ambushed
wights,

Were slain ; and left, in stinking weeds, to rot.

Upward, in forest, thence, his guides lead Aulus ;
Where, marshal of his camps, Primitius, such
An hasty bridge devised, as they might pass.
He laid hewed-alders on great cables, stretcht,
Twixt the two brinks ; and bavin strewed and earth,
Thereon. Armed Romans, by the moon's lamp, march
Beyond ; holding now drift-way of the Britons,
Which leads to the imperial camp forthright.

Wide-dawning ray, lo, utters in the East,
Chacing night's cheerless murk ; and seen is gleam,
Of arms and ensigns, of approaching legions,
From the imperial *vallum*. When now Aulus
Views, from his horse, the *castra* and Cæsar's tents ;
He with chief captains, præfects of his legions,
Rides forth, upon the spur, to salute Claudius.

With knops of gold, lo, shines, towards them, borne
forth ;
Nodding, with purple and pall, the imperial litter.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

(Soldiers, irreverent, gibe, Is Cæsar's corse !)
Which ward, lo, round, three hundred spears, of Almain's,
With knights of Rome and glittering Gaulish horse.
Being come to a stone's cast, dismounted Claudius ;
And gravely on foot, towards those that light to earth,
Cæsar advanced ; and giving his right hand,
Salutes, by name ; and calls them fellow-soldiers !
And Claudius communes with them ; he extolls
Their conduct of this war : and in this sense,
Will he, from point to point, write to the Senate.

Sith Cæsar viewed those four, now marshalled, legions,
The squalid looks admires, of his proud soldiers !
That stand, unshorn, in lean, war-wasted, ranks :
And the army salute Claudius, *Imperator* !

Warlord of Britain, enters Camulodunum
Caratacus ; where keepeth well queen Embla,
The walls ; and watch the city's magistrates.
The sire sends word, then, to all tribes and lords ;
They, here, with him, gainst Cæsar and the Romans,
The Foster-land defend, with all their powers ;
And that in view of divine Camulus !
God of their Father Brennus, which burned Rome.
But the East-men's magistrate, strong Antethrigus,
Whom gods, in so extreme infortune, cast ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Hath sworn, no more, to see the face of Caradoc,
Till he himself might smite intruding Romans.
Kynan and Idhig, gathered their spersed warriors,
With Moelmabon's sons, have Northward marched ;
And now is word, they wait, at Ouse, in arms,
Velaunos' coming, with the Northern powers.

Divine Manannan, wisdom of the Britons,
Hath sick lain, many days, at Durovernum,
But heard, the royal dune of Verulamion
Was taken and burned, and Antethrigus' army
Perished ; and Cæsar's navy come to land ;
Nor longer able to support disease,
(Heavy with years,) of march, and daily camps ;
He journeys now, with wains, in Watling street.
And will he dwell, henceforth, in dim Isle Mona ;
Where Samoth's god, with daily sacrifice,
He may entreat, for this afflicted nation !

Thorolf, next after king Caratacus,
Most valiant prince of all that live on ground,
Continually misleads in isle of Brennus,
Some hostile god ; where time is not yet ripe,
Of the stout Almain heirs of Heremod,
Of Fridia and Brennus' blood. And lest stout Thorolf,
By his only valiance, break the god's decree ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

They, night-time, sending to him lying visions,
And daily, with false soothsays, him deceive,
And neighings, strange, of his white battle-steed ;
That might he ne'er be nigh, to aid of Britons.

His vow to accomplish, which the hero spake,
In hearing of the Britons' princes, late ;
When sacrificed at merchant Troynovant,
By tiding Thames, was, to the hero Brennus ;
He ready makes, to march, with spears of Almaines,
Eight thousand, to reconquer royal Verulam.
Swells his great heart, impetuous, to achieve,
So notable high emprise, gainst enemy Romans.

To Caradoc, marching are, with king Velaunos,
The Northern powers, in aid now of South Britons.
Long was their tarrying ; chiefly, and that by cause
Of Cartismandua, who, Brigantine queen,
Infamed is, for disloyalty to VENUTIOS,
Her noble spouse ; lot-chosen of their gods,
Next to Velaunos, captain, in these wars.

Her sire, great warrior-king, was Cunobal,
Of the blue-shield Brigantes ; but Venutios,
Though a king's son, was of a subject tribe.
Yet he all noble youth, in Cunobal's hall,
Did far, in every warlike skill, excell.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Wherefore that king, young valiant prince Venutios,
Advanced, to stand, by him, in battle-chariot ;
And bear the royal shield, before his face.

Ere well his beard was sprung, this prince's breast
Was seen, with glorious scars, in his lord's wars,
Adorned, like magic signs, which in their flesh ;
With pen of ivory imbrued with woad, prick druids.
Last, token of his love and high regard,
His daughter gave king Cunobal, to his squire.
But she more fair, bright Cartismandua,
Than good, usurped, deceased her glorious sire,
All sovereignty ; even his leadership in this war.

In these late days, when coming heard of Claudius,
She, whelmed, on her fair head, had star-bright morion,
Like goddess sheen ; and fenced with scaly brass,
Her froward chest, upleapt, in emailed war-cart :
Like as some serpent, which in tawny brakes,
Pastured of cankered herbs, her slough offcast,
Now, in the sun, displays her glittering boughts.

And by her beauty, enflamed, the younger sort ;
Then followed her much pomp, of noble youth,
To Roman warfare, on shrill wheels of war-carts.
Nor wonder, when feel even relent old wights,
At Cartismandua's view, their frozen hearts.
With silver gingling bits, and barded steeds,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Her people shouting ; from king Cunobal's dune,
Isurium,¹ then the royal pomp holds forth.

The same eve, marched Velaunos, with caterfs,
From hill, whence triple fires have flamed five nights ;
Appointed place, where lords of the North March,
Assembled their caterfs : with mighty sound
Of trumps and shout, they wend, and noise of chariots.

Are the Brigantine ensigns diverse shapes
Of beasts and birds. Parisii first remove ;
And ride their war-wont lords, in iron scythe-carts.
Round the Fair-havens, are this nation's seats ;
Whereto, is fame, arrived their sires, in ships :
Like to the people of Samoth, they from Gaul's
Mainland o'erfared ; but in a later age.

Next them Novantæ march ; whose border is
Nith's shining stream. By kinships, then, armed
 throngs,

Segantians ; little statured are whose steeds.
From wide Segeia's flood, these take their name.
Voluntii follow, woad-stained naked warriors ;
Save of some hanging goat's hide, from their napes ;
Which they, shield from the cold, turn to the wind ;
And, for an harness, serves them in the wars.

Next them, Selgovians, hunters, whose quaint speech,

¹ Aldborough, in Yorkshire.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

To few, is couth. Clubbed staves and herdmen's
slings,
Bear these ; and spears, with rattling knops of brass,
To affray their enemies. Fence they on their heads,
Have all, of red-stained great upbouden glibs.
And delved pits are their bowers, in the waste heaths ;
And caves, in cliffs. Their young men, the ureox
Hunt, on wild hills, and slay, with stedfast heart,
For meat. Then, of the lordships of Velaunos,
Men march ; and of Venutios, glast-stained host,
Following, thick spears and ensigns, their lord's
chariots.

Beside whom, yet another power doth pass ;
Whom leads stout Hælion, a young comely prince.
Are these Dumnonian tribesfolk, of North March ;
Kin to Dumnonian dwellers in Duffreynt.
Their warlike bands come glittering, with long spears.
They hurl-stones bear, in bosoms of their shields.

Warlord Velaunos, as they neighbours ride,
Hath prayed the, now grey-headed, lord Venutios,
Master of war, to mount, with him, in war-cart.
Venutios numbers, (passing with swift wheels,
Before this host,) of peoples of the North,
Fifty, upon the fingers of his palms,
Caterfs of foot-folk ; are five hundred spears,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

In every one. Follows-on, great *trimarch*,
Of the North parts, five squadrons ; and, in each,
Eight score of steeds. And lords, in their own
marches,
Are all who on them sit. Two hinds, afoot,
Hath every lord, each leading a third horse.

And now come down Velaunos' powers, to Ouse ;
And Cadoc and Ruellon, with them ride.
And, lo, receive them there Moelmabon's sons ;
(That languish, yet, of wounds ;) and Hammeraxe,
And Demetan Idhig, with war-wasted powers.
And Briton lords thus met, from far-off coasts,
Gaze, each-one, inwardly, on the others' looks,
And arms and warriors ! To the warlord, Caradoc,
When the new morrow springs, shall all fare forth.

First of the Northern powers, from Camulus' walls,
In blue emalléd cart, with gilded moons,
Drawn of white steeds, is Cartismandua seen.
In proud career, o'er her steeds' flying croups,
She shakes the reins and lifts bright ivory whip.
Her famous wind-born steeds, whose horny hooves,
Glittering, with plate of gold, spurn the wild clod ;
Come fleckt with foam, as whiteness of sea flood ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And follows her, bright train of steeds and chariots.
Is like to changeful rainbow, this queen's weed.

She nighing now the town, the royal morion,
Which shone on her fair head, for heat, hath doffed :
Whence loosed, that sunbeams seem, her amber locks
Flow backward in the wind. Is this queen's countenance,

Hardy and free ; manlike is her mailed stature.
To look, in her steep eyes, were deadly feast !

But he who stands, in Cartismandua's chariot,
And bears, like the horned moon, nigh to her full,
Her silver shield, wherein of Morrighu goddess,
Be effigied the eyes, great heaven's queen,
Turning to stone hearts of her enemies,
Prince of the noble youth, is VELLOCATUS.
She bridle eftsoon draws, abasht, somewhat,
Her witches heart ! to see, (of doubtful omen !)
Tower ravens o'er yond Camulus'-city walls.

Straight, rides to meet this queen, Caratacus ;
With pomp of war-bruised chariots, from the town.
How measure her false eyes king Caradoc's stature !
When he, her warlike hard right hand, receives,
In his ; and of her welfare, courteous, asks ;
And if she come not, weary, from long voyage ?
He, warlord, then, with worship, brings her forth.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Passed the tower-gate, they mount up, by paved
street ;
Amongst fast-thronging people of this town.
And lighting, soon, the warlike Northern queen ;
Her, Embla, issuing, midst her noble women,
With gentle looks, receives ; and, by the hand,
To royal bower upleads, prepared for her,
On the town wall ; whence she the camps of warriors,
Pitched in fair meads of sliding Colne, may read.
Was that day lateward, when arrived her army.

At morrow's noon, approach Velaunos' powers ;
With whom great drifts of beves and thousand wains.
To welcome them, outrides, anew, the king ;
With lords and captains, and shrill pomp of war-
carts.

Now ben they met ; and touch those Northern lords,
Loud naming their lands' gods, his hand and glaive !

King Caradoc looking forth, from Camulus' walls,
Sees raised, in river meads, ten thousand bowers,
Of men of war, new lodged in their caterfs !
And feels, with hope of victory, again refreshed
His royal heart : and looks on that *trimarch*,
Which vanquished Roma, in old days of Brennus !

And hath Duneda sent new bands of warriors,
With hundred wains of victual, beves and flocks ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And Kowain leads stout mariners of his ships,
Expert with ropes, and nimble of their feet,
To climb on rocking masts : and those are wont
To travailous and so strait sea-faring life,
That, seems them holiday, war upon dry land.

And comes a lord of Mona, at afternoon,
To horse ; one known from far, with shining greaves,
Ergund. But for his sire, to Moelmabon,
Was foe ; from that king's sons, he goes apart,
To lodge. In force and stature, doth exceed
This prince all Britons come to Camulodunum.
Men say, he assails, as sudden storm from heaven !
Six hundred footmen, he, to Caradoc, leads.
Persuaded him Manannan, to the war.

Kings, captains, white-stoled druids, on his wide
walls,
To Camulus offer solemn sacrifice !
To them, comes Cartismandua queen, anon,
With jewelled neck, and jetting like to dove ;
And tyred her broidered locks, with fret of gold,
Wherein the plume, is seen, of a grey erne.
Issuing from her dune-gates, to Roman war,
In battle-cart, is told, it fell, upon her.

She harnessed is ; lo, on her warlike breast,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Shines plate of bronze, with dragons, wreathed, embossed ;

And silver moons. Beside Caratacus,
She sits : and when had all declared their minds,
Opens this queen her lips. With a stern voice,
She reads ; stop all nigh ways, before this town,
With great felled trees ; and weave the woods around.
With trench and pit, (wherein sharp stakes be set,)
Cumber the plain : so that the enemies' horse
Were broken, nor might soldiers keep their ranks ;
Wherein much lies, she hears, the Romans' force.

Labraid, who pilot of Duneda's ships,
Upspake then, and persuades ; with cables, knit
The caterfs' ranks ; that they, with mighty brunt,
Might strew Rome's cohorts. Cries the Northern
queen,

She would, alone, set on the marching legions !
For tiding now is brought, of their approach.

Was then, when kings and captains well have supped ;
And they had poured, to Camulus, the brown mead ;
Queen Cartismandua, in bower, her ready made.
She, on her white shoulders, cast a spotted pilch,
Of wolf-whelps' hide ; who fenced, with a ringed
harness,

Hath her lithe flanks. Then high, upon her shanks,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

She buskins laced, with tinny scales, beset.
Sith Leddiad, the victorious glaive, renowned,
Of Cunobal, on her luxurious loins,
Fair Cartismandua binds. On her bright locks,
She morion set, and silver shield embraced.

When now the moon is rising, she descends,
To Embla's court ; where, ready made, her war-
cart ;

And stand, beneath the yoke, two high-necked steeds,
Long-maned, whose generous chests, to battle, pant.
Calls Cartismandua on Morrighu, witches' goddess,
Great queen of heaven, in that she leaps to chariot !
With Cartismandua, ascénds young Velloctatus.

Now by dim street her wheels, and her team's
hooves,
Resound. Open the porters, to her, gate
Of Camulus ; and, with cry, the queen speeds forth !
Being come to her Brigantine camp, without ;
Follow her all the power of her young men ;
Which, ready in arms her wait, in this moonlight.

To Camulus' dune, descending from the North,
Had Cartismandua a certain thicket place,
Thence, Eastward, marked ; whereas deep drift-way
passed,

Twixt two, which crown dark cedars, opposed banks.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

There, is, these, marched few silent leagues, now
wait ;

Whereby, the queen looks, Romans soon must pass :
Nor fails her forecast. Levied camp had Claudius :
Before him tread the elephants ; and enclose,
The imperial litter, band of Almain spears.
Therein he slumbers, midst his trains of soldiers.

Is heard, in clear moonshine, now in night's wind,
Mules' gingling bells, that bear the Romans' stuff !
Approach the legions : they, few furlongs passed,
Gin enter in this wood. Then yells of Britons,
Sound, sudden, out, to dim night-stars, on both parts !

The queen's young men of war, from bushments,
rise.

Bliss they it count, of heaven, feast of war-gods,
To die even, in beholding of her eyes !
So makes her aspect drunken their young hearts.
Five thousand, mainly, and hurling darts, outrush.
Body to body, as hunters that slay beasts,
They thrust with spears ; with bronze long knives,
slay Romans.

Queen Cartismandua, (is springing now dim dawn,)
Romans behold, amazed, in glittering war-cart ;
Like to that huntress goddess of the night,
(Neath whose swift wheels, is fame, our Britain lies.)

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

In chariot sheen, like Cynthia crowned, she drives !
Seems the new moon shine, in her brodered hair :
And glisters, on her front, as the day-star.
And that tall young man, fighting beside her,
They gin, from mouth to mouth, Endymion ! name.

Is none so hardy, who dúrst hurl, ágainst her
His javelin ; whiles she by them shining drives !
And terrible beams seem lighten, from her eyes :
So that, on her, gaze confused, Roman soldiers !
Which hear, above the din, her cry, divine !

But after-marching Romans', warlike, trains ;
Heard tumult in the va'ward, yet unwist
The cause, press forward. Then, in the blind night,
Cohorts rebutted of the former legion,
Recoil, and trouble their well-ordered ranks.

Romans, in derne wood-path, contend with Romans.
Nor perished few, by their own fellows' glaives ;
Ere might, who friends, be known, who enemies.
And, whom, air-riding spirits, the Morrigu sends,
In the tree-tops, quench the few beams of stars.
There fall stout soldiers, one on other, slain ;
With their centurions : fell Marcellus, tribune.

Waked Claudius, trembling, quoth, He was a-cold !
And would, had he found heart, have slain himself,
Looking for dreadful altars of the druids,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

If him mishapped. But eftsoon war-wont Flavius,
Prickt, with few valorous Gauls and Roman knights ;
Restores the troubled orders of his legion.

He erects, then, double *acies*, of three ranks,
Facing to ambushed enemies, on both parts :
Behind whose backs, holding above their heads,
Their shields, on whom, from wood, falls sleet of darts,
As in a lane, the trains might, safely, pass.
Whilst, then, by clarion's sound, the rearward halt,
He hastes bring forth next after-marching cohorts ;
And them, beyond, enranged he in like sort.

Thus hath great Flavius saved, this night, the army ;
Mongst whom, seen Claudius riding on his feet !
Who quitted, for faint heart, had a knight's horse,
Which erst he mounted ; and his cloak had cast ;
And, men say, cast his shield ! Trode cohorts' press
The imperial purple ! Cæsar, as he passed,
(Now issued the armed trains, to open ground,)
Calls Flavius, Father ! There the Britons cease,
Being few, with onset, to provoke the legions.
But many are wounded seen, among the soldiers :
Who slain, were left, unburied, in dim grove.

Shrink the clear stars, those watchfires of high gods,
In vast night-camp of heaven : and cometh forth, soon,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Veiléd with grace, and amber her bright weed,
Broidered with pearl ; (for she, glad-eyed and mild,
Is maiden heavenly pure,) the sacred Dawn.

Whilst, forth, her goddess feet do gently trace :
Her crystal front, and long, ringed, golden locks,
The Graces, like to virgin bride, have crowned ;
With rosebuds pluckt from garden of the gods.

Legions then march, of Rome, in wide waste heath,
Gilded with budded brooms and whin-flowers sweet,
Where drink the early bees their morrow's mead.
Blithe partridge-cock pipes, on that bent ; the hare
Scuds, startled, from the powdered feet of soldiers ;
Whose war-wont, swart, Italic face is set,
Towards Trinobantine city of Camulus.

Lo, where that great dune, built on an hill's breast ;
With river's fence, and walled of rampires round !
Whose field, beneath, shines full of barbare arms ;
Each nation, by itself, caterfs and ensigns.
Fearing some hardy assay of Britons' war-carts,
Claudius, whose va'ward now arrived, commands,
His *castrum* mete, at distance of a league ;
Whose trench-breadth shall be fifteen feet, the depth
Twelve ; so assault he fears of hardy Britons.
Britons have breastwork heaped, beyond their stream !
Whereon, long gazing, drivelling Claudius ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Gins call this, with his solemn toothless chaps,
Scamander ; he names yond towered dune, high Ilion !

Sith, Cæsar charged slay beasts ; and to every
soldier,

Mete rate of Gaulish wine, fetched in his ships.

Cure they, to-day, their bodies, prepare arms ;

To-morrow, look to fight. Chat weary soldiers,

That pitch their leathern booths, and say ; should
Claudius,

The third day, give them spoil of yond good town ;

And sith, to winter-camps, withdraw the legions.

Lo, where wide-stretched the imperial pavilion,
Of purple silk of Seres, ceiled with line,

Azure, with silver stars ! midst legions' camp.

Therein now Claudius sits, midst Roman dukes.

In skill, he deems, of battles, they excell ;

But he in arts : witness this ordinance, which

His youth devised, of tower-machines ; that charged,

On wagons, (great squared beams,) now, with the
legions,

Arrive ; and build his shipwrights, in the plain.

Archers and slingers shall, on those machines,

Stand ; wherein are, of steel, stringed mighty engines,

On stages ; that hurl beams, with dreadful din ;

And stones of poise, each able a caterf,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

To pierce. And tower, by tower, will station Claudius,
On his two wings, and longs his middle front.
He trusts well ; should the headlong Britons' chariots,
Rushing to battle, thereby be repressed.

Standing the elephants, longs his battle-face,
Well-fenced with scales of impierceable brass,
The beasts' huge breasts, bearing their castled chines
Numidian archery, (and in each tower, five soldiers,)
Him thinks, should needs be broken, by their force,
The forward running of loose blue caterfs.

And, lo, queen Cartismandua is come again,
With war-song, and loud vaunt of her young men ;
And spoil of arms, and bloody polls of Romans !
And, from their camps, all Britons, where they
pass,

Clapping their hands, those young Brigantine warriors
Applaud ! In this, they splash through shallow ford,
Of streaming Colne ; and go up, where their ward,
Is, under gate of Camulus, to lodge.

Druids have warned, which read the sacred omens,
The island-kings, to fight, in this day's sun ;
Wherefore, left their teamed carts, without, they sit
To watch, on Camulus' toweréd gate : and thence
Those new great camps behold of sea-borne soldiers ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

The tower-machines, and strange huge buffle-elephants !
Which druids deemed, some river-gods of Rome.

And seen that come not legions, but they rest,
In four-square *vallum* ; captains of the Britons
Contain their warriors, in the camps at Colne.
Blue Britons, chanting, whet, on wild whin-stones,
Glaives, and broad brazen heads of their long spears.
Some fret, at fires, and supple sinewed bows.
Pasture, with much white grain, the charioteers,
Beside the carts, and comb their long-maned steeds.

Bare-footed, brazen-girt, in vestures white,
Now druids offer solemn sacrifice,
Of beasts, with gilded horns, to battle-gods :
To whom they vow all preys. (Soothsayers, priests,
Are those, whose foaming bloody mouths, the flesh
Of victims chew ; and who yond sacred fires
O'erleap ; and that chant magic spells !) Till eve,
None certain answer have vouchsafed the gods.
Last, kings departing, in the evening red ;
Each turns, with heavy heart, to his caterfs.

Two ravens stooped, then, from the twilight
loft ;
And, on stiff creaking wings, the camps o'erflit.
Wrying their carrion necks, with serpents' eyes,
They survieu Britons, that to sup now sit.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Then, on war-wain, they lighted ; with crude beaks,
And crooked claws, each other rend to blood.

Are war-hags those, whose impious carrion breath,
Doth taint the evening wind. To gore-swart cloud,
Forerunner of murk night, which nigheth fast,
They called have WRATH ; who, fame is, once burned
heaven :

(Wherefore him thunder-thrilled the gods, and cast,
To earth ;) him promising, to-morrow, drink,
(To slake his entrails' ever-burning thirst,)
His fill, much reek of young men's lukewarm blood.

In place, where sinks sun's chariot down, to light
The under-world, in crooked valley-steeps,
Like to some monstrous newt, mongst blind black
rocks,

Exiled from heaven's fair face, sleeps demon Wrath.
Sprawling, enrolled in long loose spotted boughts ;
There, in swart tide, his train, for boiling sweat,
He hangs. Drips venom from his poisonous jaws ;
And like black stinking reek, ascends his breath.
There his loath maw, he thrings, twixt two sharp
cliffs ;

And else his carrion snaky ribs should burst,
For cankered hate, and swelling inward fret.
Leaving the scaly horror of his corse,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Then, on those drossy banks, expired his spirit,
Uprose, in the moist winds, the damnéd fiend.

Britons feel grow then lean their warlike breasts.
Men sit, at watchfires, with distempered looks ;
Some blame their captains, in the war with Romans :
Some, desperate, plain them even of the land's gods !
Britons sore dread, what shall betide to-night.
Neath their long shields men lie ; and cannot sleep.

The warlord calls, anew, on Camulus' walls,
The kings to council. But come Cartismandua ;
She scornful queen, now, on her lord, so rails,
(Though all eyes her upbraid,) that ache men's
ears :

As strings, being toucht amiss, alwere the harp
Of gold, mis-sound. And Gorran vainly, then,
Mingles new mead, and noble youth bear round ;
Mongst Briton kings, descended from the gods.
Amidst the council, rose up and went forth,
Then, from among them, the Brigantine queen.

It Vellocatus is, who enters soon.
Combed and perfumed, comes this, seems, from the
queen !
Gold-wreathed his noble neck. He, the high gods,
(Prickt to the very soul, before them all,)

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

To witness calling, much protests the prince,
His perfect loyalty unto his lord Venutios :
But, silent, captains gaze, on him, reproof.
Venutios turns from him his royal face.

When Vellocatus, to the night, outgoeth,
Is hell in his proud looks. From Camulus' gate,
Passed forth ; he, in sullen, dark, departed place,
(Come nigh to tiding Colne,) drawn his glaive forth,
Smote deadly his chest ; and wallowed in dank grass !
Towards midwatch, haply, of the sacred night,
Of certain was he found ; which kept that path ;
And bruit, as groaning, in the silent murk,
Heard ; for not dead, but as in trance, this lieth.

Put-to his light, then, rude man of the round ;
(Quoth he,) Who, lies here, slain, in so fair
weed ?

Whose this bleak face ? Be'th not, another
saith,

It, fellows, he whom loves the Northern
queen,

That prince, that daily arides with her, in
chariot ?

A man might silver win, bearing this in,
Here, bleeding corse, to her. Ha, a sikes, a
breathes !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

A nis not dead! How's all black-run a's
blood,
In this moonshine! Heave we him, on our
shields.

Those rude wights, rugged shoulders, undersetting,
Him bearing forth ; return, with matchéd steps :
And passed the porters of the gate of Camulus ;
They mount now up, to lodging of the queen.

Sleeps Cartismandua armed ; and in her dream,
Is vext her sense, of some familiar spirit.
Her rumour wakes of arms, and tread of feet,
In the paved court, beneath! She, anon, upleapt ;
And as she was, is come forth to the porch.
She now descries, by flickering dim watchlight,
Ah! shield-borne body, of her loved Velloctatus.
All is he bloody, and seemeth dead corse, alas !

With bosom loosely knit and untressed locks ;
She, amongst them, is run down to the queen's court ;
Nor more keeps measure, in her woman's tongue ;
Nor more dissembles love, nor hides her grief.
Him, upborne to her bower, she them commanded,
All softly to lay down, on her own bed ;
That yet is warm, where she herself was laid :
So gives them, hastily, meed. But those, fared forth,
Now sparred the door ; she maketh, ah, so loud moan,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

That heard the queen's complaint is, in the street !
She lifts, as would she lull him in her arms ;
Now foldeth her bright limbs, upon him cold.
She waxed nigh mad ; and fall her tears, like rain,
On his wan face ; more pale than his, her face.
And oft her lily hands she winds, and shrieks !
Lamenting much, that her untimely speech.

Then kissed she, thousand sithes, his parted lips ;
Which like to those twinned shells the falling tide,
Leaves on some silver sand, of sea's salt shore ;
Which seeming dead, therein as pearls appear.

Swooned the queen's heart ; but when, at length,
gan mark
Her blubbered eyes, that staunch'd the clotted blood ;
She rose and called to her, her wandering mind.
With cunning fingers, she, in leechdoms, skilled,
Now searcheth every part : with waters warm,
(Wherein night-gathered herbs, in the full moon !)
Foments his hurt. Then whispering healing spell,
She binds, with salve of baume and sleepy morel.

Now is the hour, when most, twixt eve and morn,
Men wont to slumber : but taste Britons, yet,
No kindly rest, in camps of their caterfs ;
And cause are fiends, that, baleful, fly to-night.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

War-hag, stands Nemon, in terrific vision !
O'er woad-stained warrior, mongst the Trinobants ;
Commanding show, what he of living wights,
Alone, hath known of Togodumnos' death !

He rose up, trembling, from cold dream ; and drave
Him the hag-fiend, to council of the kings ;
That, yet, with Caradoc, sit in Camulodunum :
For, on them, heavy is of public cares,
The weight and hourly conduct of this war.

Before them standing, soon, the recreant wretch,
With faltering knees and dazing brain, at length,
Beknew the sooth of Togodumnos' death.
His neighbour Trugon had he, dying, found,
He tells, past knowing man, cast in a bush,
And heard him, (knowledging his treason,) breathe
Out last words, to the gods. He prayed those gods'
Forgiveness, which are judges of the dead !

Kings feel, as a cold spear smote through their loins :
Thrice, sighed the warsire king Caratacus.
Upleapt, impetuous, Cadern's son Marunus !
And, by the throat-bole, caught, in his first heat ;
Would slay, with glaive, that man of Troynovant :
But white-stoled druids did interpose their rods !
And yet gin hands slide down, of kings and lords,
Whilst fail men's hearts, to handles of their swords.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Those demon-hags confounded have to-night,
All divination of the land's pale druids.
Then sent Caratacus, as bade Verulam's priest,
Mempricios, for a swart-haired bull ; that brought
Before them, kings and captains lay their hands,
To purge the guilt of Togodumnos' death,
Upon the victim's head, between his horns :
Which slay, on Camulus' walls, then, the king's druids.
In pan of gold, received the gurgling blood,
Mempricios touched their foreheads, all, therewith.

Parted, the kings sleep weary, under shields ;
Save the strong arm of war, Caratacus ;
With whom wakes, yet, Velaunos and Venutios :
For they dispose them, send forth the trimarch,
At day-star ; which, a compass having fetched,
Should lay a wait ; that when is battle joined,
They might fall suddenly out, on the legions' backs.

One come in, to the supreme lord, contends,
(Tasgetus, prince of strange Selgovian nation,)
That chief place were, to his young men, assigned,
To-morrow, in fight, against the elephants.
Hunters, in their wild hills, of the ureox ;
They, boldly upleaping, sinews of his nape,
Wont thrill behind his bowéd threatful horns,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

With their long crooked knives of whetted bronze.
So that the roarers sudden start to ground !
In such wise, also, in sight of all the Britons,
Will they slay those Rome's monstrous snout-head
beasts.

This their request, grants king Caratacus.

Then, unto Decet's warriors, (wont to frame
Scaffolds, with ladders, in deep tinny mines,)
The warlord king permits, stand next in place ;
Beside Dumnonians of Duneda's ships,
Over against the towered machines of Romans.

King Caradoc, looking on night's starry watch,
Sees little now, to Summer's dawn, remains :
So laid him down, on splayed elk hide, was gift
Of noble Thorolf : and, with hundred spears,
Their lord around, wake valiant men-at-arms.
Then slumbers Britons' warsire, soon, and sleeps !

BOOK XVI

ARGUMENT

CAMULODUNUM. Morning, before battle. Cæsar, amongst his tribunes. Young Titus responds mirthfully to Claudius.

Caratacus arrays his blue caterfs. His speech to the Britons. The armies stand arrayed now, face to face. Roman elephants. Claudius admires the blue barbare host. Horsemen and runners are seen approaching on the plain; with whom Britons perceive is the bard Carvilios: come, men of Erinn. Britons intone a warlike chant of Carvilios. Warhounds of Erinn break out; and they leap upon the elephants. Scythe-carts of Parisii chace forth, and with them, run Kentish chariots. Selgovians assail the elephants. Belerions first draw-down Cæsar's war-towers. The like then do Duneda's shipfolk. Carvilios forth-rides, chanting lays of heroes and high gods. He is suddenly pierced by a shaft, in the eye-hole of his morion; and falls amidst his enemies. Battle joined; Britons at first prevail over Romans. A Recording Angel. A battle-wedge of Atrebat is seen rushing terribly in the field. Segontorix.

Verpatalos, lord of a band of Gaulish archers, with the Romans, goes over now to Britons' part: but will not those receive him, and Verpatalos is slain. Flavius leads on his legion. Many scythe-carts are taken. Trinobants then first yield ground. Caratacus yet heartens the blue Britons: but being hurt by a venimed arrow, the king faints and sinks down, in his royal chariot. Venutios, done-on the warlord's helm,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

returns into the battle. King Caradoc is borne back swiftly to Camulodunum. Romans outrush to the last overthrow of blue Britons. Velaunos is slain.

Vellocatus, waking from his trance, hears the cries of approaching Romans. He besought then the queen, to send out his young men, warriors; in succour of the Britons. Cartismandua makes sign from the wall; and they break forth. She herself issues in war-chariot. Flavius, seen these new Britons, approaching; severs them, as they run, into two parts. Young lords of Cartismandua's bands are smitten; and the queen dismayed hastily turns her chariot. After her pursues Titus.

The city-gates are shut. The sun goes down, when Romans return from the pursuit. Claudius banquets with his tribunes. Past middle night, cometh the great Erinn host, which followed Carvilios' harp. Ith, the naked king, them leads. They halt and hear, is fallen Carvilios; and king Caratacus is slain. The Erinn men march on, to smite Carvilios' enemies. They, o'erleapt the *vallum*, make dread night-slaughter, in the camps of legions. Claudius fled secretly forth, from his pavilion, mounts to a war-tower, and hides himself therein. Erinn warriors break again forth from Roman *castra*. They find Carvilios' corse, and bury him, where he fell, in Roman blood.

On the morrow a great storm rageth till eve. Claudius rides, to view the situation of the Britons' dune. Aulus sends letters to the Longport.

BOOK XVI

BRIGHT Dawn, on throne of ivory and of gold,
Is mounting now, beloved of men and gods,
In purple weed ; and kings under yond walls,
Harnessed, helm-clad, in battle-carts forth-ride.

Then the high sire, as Belisama inspired ;
That none them count disparaged, this great day,
Day wherein they should fight in Camulus' view,
(One people of Samoth, gainst intruded strangers,)
Unto each assigns, by druids' sacred lot,
Which they, before the kings, had last night cast,
His place. Save only as it, by ancient right,
(Keepers of West and East March of this Isle,)
Pertains ; Silures and Kent men shall hold
The wings ; and midmost, Catuvelaunian nation.

But hark ; whilst Britons, to the camp of legions,
Gaze forth, speak Roman clarions a stern note.
And, lo, of bloody hew, scarlet, in grain,
On Cæsar's tent, is splayed the imperial cloak ;
Token, that should, this day, be battle joined !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Straight, issue cohorts, from all ports, at once :
And digged part down, part razed, of the paled work ;
Lo, led now harnessed forth, huge nozzled elephants !
That seem like rocking ships, mongst trains of
soldiers ;

Whose painted castles full of light-armed archers,
Of strange aspect. Behold then tower-machines,
Nodding, on immane wheels, forged hardly forth ;
With travail and with pain of men and elephants.

Array them, in long battles, Cæsar's legions ;
And Roman knights prick forth, with glittering
spears.

Lo, on white Gaulish steed, where bald-pate Claudius,
Rides ; to whom now obeys the world of Rome !
Aulus rides, with him ; legates then of legions,
His marshals of the camp and of the horse ;
And noble Asiaticus Valerius,
Who of consular state : and friend is named of Claudius.
(Is greatest this, of all that live in Rome,
In riches and dispense !) From Gaul to Britain,
He, whom the Senate sends, to wait on Claudius,
Is lately o'erpassed, in his own three-banked ship.

From Cæsar, now, his legate, Aulus, parts ;
And where he comes, Fight, valiantly, he exhorts,
In the *imperator's* view ; in whom, remit,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Lies, or else punish, fault of their revolt.
Record their antique virtue and achieve,
To-day such victory, as may end the war.

And merry, in his fond mood, carps gat-toothed
Claudius,

Mongst Roman captains, nodding on them fast,
His totty brow ; and shows, crowned with clay dykes,
The Britons' dune, set on an hill's high breast,
With the imperial finger ; and cries oft,
Ha ! high-walled Ilium ! and Colne-stream calls
he,

Scamander ! and yond clustered blue caterfs,
Teucrians ; and Britons' scythe-carts, Phrygian
chariots ;

Whose king the Priamid blue Caratacus ;
With whom Sarpedon, and some queen or goddess,
Come from a land of women-warriors.

The Oiléid, Geta is ; great Ajax Telamon,
Vespasian Flavius ; busy-headed Aulus,
Odysseus ; Diomed-like, is this young Titus !

To heaven's high stars, quoth he, quaint-witted
Greeks

Have overmuch extolled their little deeds,
As children reck much of their saddle-reeds,
Whose sanded towers them seem a mighty world.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Till now, have Romans sooner wanted words,
(And they shall soon want worlds !) to set theirs
forth.

Who lives, he cries, were able to record
Ten-years' war-glory of Quirîtes Romans.
Were leisure, he would so great argument,
Himself entreat. Should certain letters help,
Which he, a private man, found, in his youth,
And since set forth ; whereby he could endite
All barbare sounds, even these war-shouts of Britons !

Ache his great tribunes' ears, of Claudius' speech.
Them seems, like culver, becking on a bough,
Cæsar's white poll ; and like a flickering leaf,
His maffling tongue. Is fain, this morn, fond
Claudius,

To look on his proud war-wont marshalled legions.
Yet most he, in his secret, doth admire ;
That Claudius is that army's *imperator* !

This portent of a man, in covert breast,
All mock, faint germ of great warfaring Drusus ;
Who subdued barbare nations, to far Elbe.
Them thinks, that was this rightly naméd Claudius ;
So his tongue halts. Impatient, vox his captains ;
Before whom lies a day of strenuous fight.

Young Titus answers, in his mirthful vein ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

(Who nigh to Cæsar rides, mongst Roman knights ;)
Did certes not men fight, before high Ilion !
But bladders, wine-sacs, scudding in much wind ;
Unto whom each bodkin's prick was certain death.
He accounts them all not worth one Roman legion !

Many a poor hunter, lion, in field or forest
Hath hardily pierced, whereof heard little vaunt,
Being wight of mean regard and barbarous : but
Had such one not Achilles haply slain ?
Whom could not Hector kill. Were not, less strong,
The better of them both, than horse ? or swift
Than is wild ass ? What three men, leagued their
force

Had not that son o'erthrown of a sea-goddess ?
What Roman bestiary¹ had not tossed his noose,
On that proud neck, for all his furious boast ;
And him repressed, aye, and slain, like salvage beast ?

Hart-swift Achilles, what though he were strong
As is a Titan, stripe yet of slung whin-stone,
Or quarrel, shot from steel-stringed Roman engine,
Methinks, had slackt his divine knees anon !
Nor Greeks used any certain discipline,
Before Troy town ; more than, now, Gauls or
Almains ;

¹ *Bestiarius* : a fighter with beasts, in the public games.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Men without all invention, in the wars.

Thus jests young Titus ; who, with ruddy face,
Comely, straight-limbed, pricks forth, then, confident,
To the left horn, o'ergainst blue Britons' scythe-carts.

But Cæsar seeing lower, hastes answer Flavius,
His father ; Yet bears Titus certain scroll,
Aye, in his bosom, of that blind Homerus ;
Wherein he studies wars of old Troy-town.
Is this the fountain of his noble nature !
And sings he, crowned at banquets, with fresh flowers,
Those verses of sweet sound ; even in men's ears,
That skill but small of letters, of vain Greeks ;
Such as himself, who homely Roman-born.

In presence of his foes, Caratacus
His glast-stained tribes arrays, in thick caterfs :
Wherein the valour of the great North March
And South shall vie. Are hundred seen their ensigns.
He, twixt the hosts, rides forth, with king Venutios,
Drawn of white-rushing team, in swift scythe-chariot.

All Briton dukes speed, likewise, in shrill war-carts.
Where they draw rein, they hearten, with rapt speech,
Their nations, to do valiantly, as in view
Of all the army. Ride Moelmabon's sons,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Upon that further part with king Velaunos.
With Kowain HÆLION drives ; whom king Duneda
His son names, sith fell noble Morag slain.

Right worthy prince is this, with martial face,
Who North Dumnonians rules, a kindred folk ;
(Though parted, yore,) with those of fair Duffreynt.
Their aspect one, speech, shields, bright arms and
ensigns :

Whence, as one people, have they joined their camps.
Is told, when travailled, of old time, Duffreynt
Famine ; part of this nation, which fared forth,
Had in North parts, found seats, and livelihood.

Hark ! cries Caratacus : and caused his main voice,
Some aery gods, rebellow from steep clouds,
(Like flitting tents, pitcht in void element ;)
If we do fail, to-day, then falls our state :
Kinsmen, expect the Roman servitude !
Be not one household, of our Briton gods,
This island's peoples. As one father's sons,
Then fight all we, gainst strange invading
legions.

And ye, from your high seats, O heavenly
ones,
Our fathers' gods ! with shield and spears,
descend,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Into this battle. Stretch, from Camulus'
walls,
Our wives, and weeping babes, to us, their
hands,
Beseeching, they were not made Romans'
thralls!

Appeased was all contention, mongst the Britons ;
For had their gods sent, with the morning breath,
Before the rising sun, an healing spirit,
Upon their camps. Then spread their swart-sheen
wings,

Casting a cry, which every heart amazed,
Those hags took heavy flight. Sith, on iron cart,
Wherein flits shrouded Night, the hag-fiends ride ;
To her abysmal deep, beneath the earth.

Queen Cartismandua, in despiteful grief,
For Vellocatus, cometh then, no more, forth :
Who fights, who falls, she little recks or naught,
Nor Romans fears ; her world is Vellocatus.
Lie idly encamped her power, at the town-gates.

Stand the great armies, in long opposed ranks,
Still looking on each-other's threatful face.
Are legions confident ; but wait Claudius' dukes,
That Britons see, to-day, so much increased,
Upon advantage, to spare Roman blood.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Though ready to rush forth, inconstant Britons ;
Are they as tide, which wafts no certain wind.

This dures, till midday of that Summer-sun :
When horsemen, on both parts, now light, from steeds.
Be seen the great towered elephants ; that, like some
Swart rocks, do stand in glittering waves of bronze ;
Their long snout-hands to sling, and wide lap-ears
To flag, impatient of their immense force.

Cerulean Britons, which, with dreadful shout,
Were wont rush, headlong, on their enemies,
Now sit on the green herb. None, from his place,
Removes in the caterfs. Dull are their hearts,
A sapless squalor creepeth in their loins ;
Whom nourished hath no kindly rest, to-night.

Under a state of gold and purple cloth,
Cæsar sits shadowed, mongst Rome's shining ranks ;
Whose helms with leaves are bound, for Summer heat.
Britons far-off behold, that this is Claudius !
Mongst them, the king, great-voiced Caratacus,
Lighted from chariot, midst white-stoled war-druids,
Invokes his battle-gods ; Bran, Camulus,
(Whose image sheen, set o'er the dune's tower-gate,)
And heroes' spirits, Cunobelin, Togodumnos.
Chaired druids begin, then, solemn battle-chant,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Intone ; whereto response, with one vast throat,
Make Britons' host ; wherewith, hark, shrilling note,
Of women from dune walls. And heard their gods ;
That, in the island powers, infuse new force.
Then Britons clash to shields their glaives and spears !

Looks Claudius forth, on strange Britannic chariots ;
And in the plain, still, in his wavering thought,
Sees city of Priamos, sees blue Hellespont :
Then trembles he ; and quakes his various heart.
Yond countenance of fierce nations, he admires ;
Whose shields, like painted doors, before their breasts.
Seem sea-gods' children, yond blue-painted warriors !
Long yellow-haired, tall and great limbed, as Almain.
He would, of such, he might conscribe a legion !
Aye, and this will he do ; and them, also, send,
(When Isle Britannia won,) to wars of Rome !
And Claudius drew his tablets forth, anon ;
As that he somewhat would endite ; and questions,
With knights, (come in from field,) and libertines.

Erst seen of women, which man Camulus' walls,
Is powderous cloud, o'er the hot champaign wide ;
As rolling smoke, ascending to the gods :
To Britons, in the plain, seems cattle-droves.
Romans fear coming of new glast-stained nation.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Sith, those, not many horsemen, are discerned ;
With mingled runners, wavering on the plain :
And scouring on, before them, battle-hounds,
Of Erinn kind, renowned for force and stature ;
That two might break the neck of a wild bull.
Now Britons all perceive the bard Carvilios,
That with them rides ; and hail, with infinite throat !
On shining wheels, to meet him, kings outride.

Comes, powdered, lo, with dust of their long
voyage,
Carvilios, mongst strange pictured wights from Erinn ;
Isle of derne altars of the dying sun.
Mother of heroes, seed of the god Dagda :
Prickt, on whose flesh, beasts' and birds' images,
Are seen ; and limned the like on their broad shields.
An army of foot-folk, after these, rush on.

Hark, a new shout of glast-stained nations' throats !
Which rising, in their ranks, intone vast chant,
Known to all Britons ; and which bard Carvilios,
Had made, in that long year before the war ;
Chanting from court to court, from hall to hall.
When, on your hills, ye see smoke warning
fires ;
And hearken, through the land, calling her
sons,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

The battle-trump, with bloody mouth, to
arms:

Leap-up! young warriors, gather from all
hearths.

Before you, armed, shall go your battle-
gods.

And when, in field, ye, with the foemen,
meet,

Stand with pressed shield to shield, and
fellowed feet,

To feet, a strong pale-wall of valorous
breasts,

In stedfast ranks. None, from his band,
thrust forth,

To vaunt his several valour, without fence
Of harness, gainst bronze-sharded Roman
soldiers.

Shall like entuned music, in your ears,
Of harps and reeds, at feasts and altar-fires,
Sound bloody, immane, confused, dread
battle-noise,

Of smitten shields, twixt striving opposed
fronts,

Yelling of infinite throats, to men and
gods;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Shrill axe-trees, neighing of fierce steeds,
the shout

Of dukes, hoarse trumps; strange mighty
cry of legions!

Not only stands, in brightness of his arms,
A warrior's praise; he, valorous, covets
wounds,

Bove bracelets and ring-gold. And when
with scars,

Adorned, in public feast, he leads the
dance;

Him maidens praise, men envy in their hearts;
Honour old men of war his glorious youth.

Worship and dignity, unto such, accrue;
To their lives' end, with heritage of name,
Unto their children. How much better were,
Young warrior fall upon his comely face,
Amidst his fellows, on his war-bruised targe,
Than, void of honour, scape, from field, with
life!

Him heroes old shall, in the underworld,
Last, to their glorious fellowship, receive.

What time, with adverse ensigns, ye rush on;
Whereon, with flittering wings, sit gods of
death;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Like as the bolt, ye were, of thundering Taran ;
Be rage of famished wolves, in your fierce
 breasts :

As their sharp teeth, the iron and bitter bronze,
Which in your violent hands. Under your
 shields,
Like wild bulls, leap your bodies' matchless
 force.

Those warhounds, venting then strange sent of
 elephants ;
Have burst their leashes, with resistless force !
They, now, deep-baying, scour betwixt the armies.
Then cry rose up of thousands, on both parts.
Some Erinn hounds pierce slight Numidic shafts !
The remnant raging forth, with open throats,
On those huge nozzled beasts, leap, twixt their tusks ;
And, with their sharp claws, rend, and snatch with
 teeth,
Their leathern flanks. Those bellowing, and waxed
 mad,
Their castles hurl ; and Afric soldiers cast.
Some founder, some roll, furious, in the field ;
Some turned, confound the orders of their legions.
They tread down men. Enforced were some centurions,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Shout to their soldiers ; The beasts' bellies pierce !
Those sink ; and yell to heaven, cerulean Britons !

That seen, Parisii chace forth, in swift scythe-carts,
Of iron. Vie with them, Cantion's noble youth.
On Romans, fallen, with full career of chariots ;
They enter hardily, in breaches of the legions ;
And reap their hook-wheels bloody swathe of soldiers :
Gainst whom, from yoke-trees, on their painted beams,
Running, they hurl down iron sleet of javelins ;
And on the elephants ; being gored whose chines,
(Wherein, stand Britons' darts now, thick as grass,)
Lo, like some strange huge urchins, tower aloft.

Shrink, from before their burning wheels, whole
cohorts.

Men fallen and wounded, loud lament beneath.
Soldiers yell, Dogs devour them ! in whom force,
More than a man's, upleaping on their shields.

Behold Selgovians, running, on their part,
Gainst the elephants rangéd, on that league-wide face
Of legions. Of those snout-head immane beasts,
Some swerve, some, wounded, hurl their girded towers.

Those hunters, leaping on the monstrous beasts,
That trémbles and some ones, lo, are fallen to knee ;
Do, lightly, as children, from their painted holds,
Pluck forth those tawny strange Numidian wights ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And hurl, with death-wounds, down, or break their
bones.

They, with long hunting-knives, of hard-ridged bronze,
The nerve do thrill of the huge elephants' napes ;
That founder, slain, in sight of the two armies.

Britons smite hands, exulting, and their shields !

Fast follow, (fenced their flanks of squadroned war-
carts,)

Bearing, on shoulders, ladders, swart Belerions.
Under long moon-shields, these, in sleet of shafts,
Reared up their stairs, to Roman towered machines,
The rungs, lo, nimble as squirrels, now, upmount !

What though, of Decet's warriors, many an one,
Tumbles by javelin pierced, back, without life ;
Yet some in-fixt and hammered, have, iron hooks ;
Wherethrough reeve, other, cables ; which, drawn up ;
Hundred thereon, and hundred, strong arms heaving ;
They make those towers, eftsoon, to nod, to stoop ;
To oversway : they fall, with ruin great,
And dreadful death of all within them, Romans !

Yond, Kowain's ship-folk likewise, under shields,
Armed their stout hands, with grapples, cords and
bills,

(Them Labraid leads,) war-towers, to them, opposed,
Assail ; and, with sharp iron, hew axe-trees huge ; .

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Whereon should roll, upon their timbered wheels,
Those mighty storied frames. Other up-hurled,
(Though shafts, though stones hail on their targets,
 lifted

Above their heads,) have ship-gaffs, whose sharp beaks
Hold fast. They heaving then, by companies, with
A loud raised shipmen's chant ; make rock, lean, reel,
The staged war-towers ; that last their valiant hands
Do overthrow ! Rose cry of dying Romans !
Nathless, durst cohorts' soldiers not their ordinance
Break, in face of swift squadrons of shrill scythe-carts.

Helm-clad, on startling steed of Gaul, outrides
Crowned, (king Cunobelin's gift,) with gilt oak-leaves,
And Gaulish shining mails, on his large breast,
Behold that noble warrior bard Carvilios, .
Chanting loud lay of heroes and high gods !

Then pause men fight, for he upholdeth glaive !
Carvilios, with loud voice, hark, curseth Romans.
Cleaved sudden the air Numidic scudding arrow :
It thrilled the eye-hole of the hero's morion !
Nathless, not turned aback that noble bard,
His dying face : but pricking fast, on steed,
He falls, now, amidst his thick-ranged enemies !

Britons do set their teeth, to avenge Carvilios ;
As each should wreak him, for his father's son ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And who, of all their kings, was public guest.
Erst Trinobants, the people of Camulus, whose
Is yond great dune ; when, from their toweréd walls,
They see how women, all ungirt their paps,
And loost down their long comely locks, stretch forth,
To them their palms and lift their little ones !
No longer wait for sign, from the warlord ;
Who, in far field, from tribe to tribe, swift rides,
In glittering chariot, mongst the blue caterfs :
But straight, as by impulsion of some god,
They break forth, shouting, like to rushing flood.

The royal tribe of Catuvelaunian Britons,
That next them stand, in vast array of shields,
Whom Iddon this day leads, advance then foot.
Carvilios ! (is their cry,) Cunobelin's guest.
Would they, from Romans, save Carvilios' corse.
Shout Roman soldiers, of the opposed legions ;
Which running hurl their darts. Come to hand-strokes,
Britons, like billows, fall on plate-clad soldiers.
They rent, with fierce tough hands, down, Roman
shields :

Their gorge, with bronze-head heavy spears, invade.

Assail Silures, and stout sons of Kent,
At once, both wings of Romans and allies.
Make head renowned Brigantes, with thick powers. .

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Rush mainly and battle join, with dreadful cries,
Demetans and Durotriges, Ordovices,
And Coritavians, whom Velaunos leads.
Leads on king Hælion North and South Dumnonians :
With whom Icenians, new caterfs and war-carts,
Valorous bands of young warriors ; that in fight,
As those their kings, now follow Hiradoc.
They áll hurl on the Romans' triple ordinance !

Prevailed, on the two wings, erst, stern Silures,
And men of Kent. The middle have enforced
Warriors of stature, royal Catuvelaunians.
Howbe their duke, whose warlike youth renowned ;
(When his swift feet could outrun three-horsed war-
carts,)

Now, sitting, rides, in chariot ; and *uneath*
The hero's palsied hands the supple reins
May hold of his fierce steeds. In rushing wind,
Hover his wintered locks. Joys Iddon lead,
Gainst legions of invading Rome ; (yet green
His heart,) in field of glory, his young men.

Return, which erst brake through, Brigantine scythe-
carts,
And seem, with iron glittering wings, those rush,
On wavering Romans' backs ; (like as in days,
Of peace, we see an hen, for her young birds,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Leap smiting, with her feathers, beak and claws.)
Whom follow that great trimarch of the North ;
Which darts cast then on hindward of the legions.

Beholding red-haired Taran and fierce-eyed
Andates, and man-slaying Camulus,
And comely Belinus, who, the archer-god ;
Is, next to Camulus, the shield of Britons,
(Nor yet, in field, seen Fortune of great Rome ;
Which leads even gods, as children, by the hand,)
Britons' proud deeds rejoice their divine breasts.
And marked the valour of each duke, record
They, from what loins he sprung. Are Roman arms,
Bet back, on every part, and staggering legions.
And Cæsar hasted mount to steed ; whom saved
Seemed hardly his body, amidst thick squadroned
horse,
And strength of knights and stout Batavians.

The gods, to thee, give, great Caratacus,
This glory, in recompense, that henceforth is lost
Thy kingdom Rumbles, with the myriad-tread,
The sod, of warriors ; whose long opposed ranks,
Be like to wrestling waves, that fall in blood.
Seems the immense bosom of the element,
Shudder, to heaven, with mortals' confused noise. .

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And, quoth the Muse ; An heaven-descended One,
I saw, above the battle-rage ; and kneeled,
In a white mist, he, on his knees, and leaned,
On his bright wings ! and he recorded names
Of all war-murdered ones, Britons and Romans !

Comes the warlord, with triple rushing team.
As shard, cast of strong pulse, o'erscuds sea-waves,
Such Caradoc's leaping wheels seem and winged war-
cart.

Standing, the sire, aloft, in battle-chariot ;
Some war-god seems. Raging, by him, in fight,
The hero of the North, Venutios, rides.
Demon of death, Dis, snatcht each flying shaft,
In the flit air, or dart of his, doth pierce
Some chief one, of blue Britons' enemies.

Riding, from tribe to tribe, from duke to duke,
With great voice, Caradoc heartens blue caterfs.
And now he sends forth all that rest of chariots ;
Them Beichiad guides. Those ruin on the cohorts,
Of Aulus' left wing : hurling they, as tempest,
Ranks overthrow ; and bray them in the dust !

Immense new shout ! seen, rushing from South part,
Armed men, in field, are Belges by their shields.
Is Cunoglas, lord of old royal house ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Plough-wise, with valour of a god, them leads !
His helm is braided steel, his hauberk plate,
Of proof, inlaid, with floweréd Gaulish work.
He the head ; the ribs are stoutest Belges' champions :
For like long row-ship, smitten forth of oars,
On bloody waves, those break the battle-press.

But turned again, from their tremendous voyage ;
Who was their captain, bleeding much, uneath,
Men uphold, midst their wedge, tall Cunoglas !
Dead soon, they cannot choose, but let to fall
On ground, that glorious spoil. Who, in his room,
Helm-clad, now leads, is man of immense force.
Leaf-crowned, this runs ; and fenced is his vast
chest,
With swart-stained mails, lo, smirched with much
war-blood.

This their wedge-head, he battles, without shield :
And by his shout, an Atrebat he is !
And seem men hear, when terribly he cries,
(The stature his,) voice of Segontorix !
Insomuch, that his swift career upholding,
Who hastened thither is, in shrill scythe-chariot ;
With cry, hark, great warlord Caratacus,
His name enquires and house illustrious ?
Unto whom that hero, a moment stayed his course ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Spake, Nurseling of the foster-gods, thee,
Caradoc,

Give they war-glory and endless victory!
Know that am I, unworthy seed of Commius,
He that was king, whiles stood our happier
state,

In dune Calleva, now burned walls and
waste.

So crying, he hurled forth yet more vehement !

When scaped Segontorix was, from Cogidubnos ;
He, went to forest, warred, mongst thicket brakes,
On beasts ; till all his royal weed to-rent,
And tawny so, and scratcht his noble face,
That no more known the Guledig was, of wight.

Befell then, certain horsefolk, Gauls, which ride,
With guides, post-messengers, unto nigh Longport,
Before that Belges' forest, needs must pass.
Them found Segontorix, lighted, at brook-side,
That watered their tired steeds. Few vassals,¹ come
In arms, unto the king, were with him there :
And some ones, of the Gauls, those slew, anon ;
And fled the rest from Guledig's great force.

But he moved of some god, spoiled a Gaul, dead,
Man of great stature, of his bright mailed harness ;

¹ Celtic, *gavas*, a youth, servant.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Him rayed in that war-weed ; but, sith, it stained,
(Still madding in his mood,) with warlike woad ;
That druids had, for the king, ere, of that wood
Simplified, in the wild paths, and it prepared.
This, likewise, did, to pleasure him, his few warriors.

At Guledig's cry, those, mounted then, Gauls' steeds ;
Had issued from wood-side. Men gathered, armed,
From many a grange, to them, and homestead burned ;
Which their warfaring cries heard, as they rode :
Yet none durst ask, Is this Segontorix ?
And were they joined, to-day, to Cunoglas.

Yonder, fight cloud of archers, from main Gaul ;
Which, lately passed the narrow seas, with Claudius ;
Fenced with round bucklers. Them, four hundred
bows,

(*Ambacti* named ; and *gessetas*, his hired servants,)
One leads Verpatalos, lord in a great dune :
But runs derne whisper, in his people's ears,
Had Pallant, freedman of the imperial palace,
Their lord's young wife beguiled. In this hour, was
Seized extreme passion, on Verpatalos' soul ;
Seen those great deeds, of Atrebatan Britons.
He them, with both his Belgic hands, applauds !
That, oak-leaf-crowned, hurl, fighting-on, to death !
And now those cleave Vespasian's *pia* legion.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Mongst his light warriors ; (that do cast-up tufts
Of grass, to know how stands the wind aloft,
Which mars their arrows' flight ;) hark, cries Ver-
patalos,
Upholding hand ! (his bowmen cease then shoot,)
In common speech of main and island Gauls,
Is come the day of vengeance, for our harms !
Just gods, which passed Italic Alps, with
Brennus,

Conjoin, again, our arms against proud Rome.
This said Verpatalos, raised loud Gaulish chant,
Steed mounts ; and issues from beside the legions !
Follow, with rattling quivers, his most warriors ;
That, running, cast their shields, behind their backs.

Lifting, to Kent men, that rush nigh, in chariots,
Verpatalos suppliant palms ; he, Kinsmen, cries,
Give passage ; that to king Caratacus,
We may us join, and Britons' blue caterfs !
These grant : Gauls then, still running, come to part,
Where kings, of all blue Britons' tribes, had left
Reliefs, strong mingled bands, in covert place.
Gauls, loud, as they nigh to them, name, (right hands
Outstretching,) common gods. But minding those,
Alone, that former overthrow, at Thames,
By fraud of Gauls ; whereby, was Antethrigus

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Smitten, and Britons' army cast away ;
(And Dryg, hot-hearted lord, to-day, commands,)
Would not receive, though those their crooked bows,
Have cast : but Britons, unsheathed furious glaives,
Closing them round, begin the foremost slay :
They pluck, then, lord Verpatalos, from horse !

He, nobleman, would not recoil, nor fight.
An hasty dart, hurled through his gorge, alas ;
His woes eftsoons have ending. Ceased his voice,
Tremendous, whelms, upon his reeling sense,
Of never-ending sleep, the purple night !
And fled lamenting, from his comely corse,
Pasture of crows and kites, in land of Brennus,
His ghost. Snatcht Belges bowmen up wild stones,
Gainst Britons, which them slay ; die, desperate !

Being raised new clamour, in their hindward, thus ;
As erewhile in Thames' field, wry back blue Britons,
(Which hear that cry !) their necks, doubting their
hearts ;

And pause their battle-weary hands to fight.

Flavius then, making head, leads on his legion :
And they, thick shielded hedge of glaives and spears,
With strong effort, long loose ranks of blue Britons,
Beat back : and Sabine's horsemen them o'errun.
Then taken were many teams of broken scythe-carts,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Whose riders slain to ground. And Roman engines,
Launching from scaffolds, laid on heavy wains,
With hideous randon, stones and great winged
beams,
Confound and strew that trimarch of the North.

Legions, confirmed their ranks, with brazen clarions,
All give, at once, new onset. They fall on,
Like winter waves. Long-shielded Trinobants,
Which erst advanced ; must yield first ground to
Flavius !

Yet fighting, foot by foot. Nigh whom, (Marunus,
Their duke, being hurt now of a Roman javelin,)
Shrink valiant bands, of merchant Troynovant.

Then, were caterfs o'erborne of Durotriges ;
Seen, sudden, valorous Golam plumb from chariot !
An hurled huge engine-stone brast all his chest.
At his steeds' feet he fell, and lay full still ;
Forgetful of his people and Moridunion.
Pendol, his friend, a prince of fenny march,
At Pedred's stream, leapt down, before the enemies,
In the field's midst, from swift scythe-cart ; who
sought,
With rapt effort, to save the hero's corse ;
Fell, shield and body, pierced, of Roman darts.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Among the island kings, seed of the gods,
That, breathing in their living breasts, infuse
New force ; out of the battle were withdrawn,
Awhile, some ones, to fresh their sweating steeds,
And bind their wounds. The sire Caratacus
Yet rides, sublime ; and seems the battle-god.
He everywhere doth comfort, with main voice,
The Britons' woad-stained breasts, gainst harnessed
soldiers.

And, with him, Gorran guides the royal team.

Returned Venutios, to the king Velaunos,
Restores the battles of the Northern powers.
But, whilst his raging wheels, in warlike field,
Reap living swathe ; is noised, young Fythiol fell,
In further part ; and with that valorous duke,
Of East-men, are cut-off both men and chariots.
An hundred, thither, ready scythe-carts leads
Caratacus, then : but o'er the island gods,
Gin now prevail the mightier gods of Rome !

Early in the battle, had a roving arrow
Attained the flesh of great Caratacus.
Sped of Numidic bow, it upward glanced
Had from courbe brow of the white royal chariot.
Gored the lord's thigh ; him, like a snake, it bit,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

With poisoned fang, under his mailéd harness.
King Caradoc had that hauberk of Manannan,
Woeworth ! left uphanged, in Caer Verulam ;
Where was it fallen a prey, these days, to Romans :
(And which, being sent to Rome, that same year,
shown

Was, in the triumph of returned Claudius !)

But, privily, drawn the shaft, forth, had Venutios ;
And bound, with precious salve ; (which, in an horn,
He bare aye to the wars,) the throbbing sore.
Would not the supreme lord, for this, forsake
The field ; but, longtime, hid his rankling grief.
And seemed his chariot the sun's burning cart,
(Illustrious lamp, to all succeeding ages,
Hail glory of Britain, great Caratacus !)

Yet, covertly, under bands, the hero bleeds.
Corrupting, then, the venim, all his veins,
Creeps, little and little, in his heart, a frost.
Sighs Caradoc, feeling now decay his force :
Sighs to his gods, he now for-weary is.
And languishing, on this tardy Summer sun,
Looks, pales ; and eftsoons faints his living force.
Issued his golden whip, and fall the reins,
From his high hands ; which Gorran, by him, caught.
Sinks, sunlike, Caradoc, in his battle-cart !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Gorran, his right embracing him, afraid
The sire should fall, out of his jumping chariot,
Him pains, with left hand, rule the royal steeds.
But, is not his, that pulse, which wont them guide ;
Nor their lord's martial voice, that cheers, that
chides ;

Whence, looking backwark, they, a moment, stand !
Stoopt their broad croups, then, they forewent the
wind ;

Turning from battle, bearing their lord home :
They break back, towards tower-gate of Camulodunum.

Thwarts to the royal scythe-cart, king Venutios.
And Ergund, erst, in field, he called, by name ;
Known by the homicide gleam of his broad glaive,
His immense stature and his towred targe.
Running, in three bands, Ergund and his warriors,
With inclined shields ; beat back their bleeding
spears,

Nigh harnessed Romans, and tall Gauls, allies.

At Caradoc's weary voice ; uneath whose steeds
Were stayed, Gorran and Kowain him uplifted,
Bear to Venutios' cart. His helm, unlaced,
With dragon-crest, doth hastily on king Venutios :
Then Kowain, shield, which Gorran bare, embraced.
Those giving Gorran charge, speed to the walls,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

With Caradoc, couched in iron Brigantine chariot ;
They both upleap, in the lord's winged white scythe-
cart !

Returned into the battle, seemed Venutios,
Cunobelin's warlord-son, his steeds and chariot.
There now had stern Silures repulsed Romans ;
Though fallen a third part of their naked warriors.
Maglos they find, with Ordovican Kynan :
For joined had those two valorous their armed
powers.

Loud heard, then, bove the tumult, voice of Geta !
Who, on his tribunes calling and centurions,
Erects, foursquare, amidst the field, his legion ;
(Which order this old duke, like to a *castrum*,
Outfound, of late.) They grounding their stiff spears,
All easily, then, sustain, on every part,
The impetuous swarming force of barbared enemies.

Thus those ; whom onset, ere, of battle-carts,
And brunt of that famed *trimarch* of the North,
Cut-off, approach, again, to the main army.
By whom r'enforced, of new, outrush those legions,
To the last overthrow of blue caterfs ;
Confusedly now arrayed. Then, by vast poise,
Of Roman shields, is naked Britons' front

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Borne back, in routs. Were even then, who most
valorous,

Constrained convert their face. In that assault,
Velaunos fell, great duke of all North Britons !
Who, for his oath's sake, would not turn his chariot.

Certain centurion was, which him advanced,
Desiring glory ; and that his hands robust
Might slay some chief one of cerulean Britons.
This man's hurled lance, then king Velaunos pierced,
Twixt his right mammel and the golden belt ;
Which entering the frail bulwark of his life,
The liver thrilled. And fell down from his chariot
The war-king, at that stroke ; and gave the ghost.

Riches, nor hundred champions of his house,
Nor sacrifices, nor mails of hard brass,
In this his fatal hour, might save Velaunos :
Whose destiny, already, had shaped the gods, what
night

The gentle Aguitha, flower of maidens all,
Him, in her bridal bower, of royal seed,
Conceived ; and Tees, betwixt his flowery banks,
Making his streams run slow, her lulled to rest.
Nor aught availeth, with the fatal god,
To turn away his stroke, our mortal gifts.

Loud shouting, they have slain great barbare duke !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Lo, bronze-clad soldiers of invading Rome,
Trample, as they rush on, in bloody dust,
His royal fortune, and his reverend face.
And they slew, with him, Kelidon in the scythe-cart,
His cousin's son. Enveloped of the reins,
Was dragged his breathing corse. In bitter throes,
His limbs, like smitten adder, beat the ground,
Where, hewed of swords, he yields his warlike breath.

New shout raised! rush in all the field forth
legions :

That hurl, now, back blue warriors, on all parts.
He, then, in vain that seems Caratacus,
Venutios, whom draw forth the royal steeds ;
Before whom Kowain lifts the warlord's shield,
Reproves, exhorts, with voice magnanimous.
As ere, in valour, now, the glast-stained Britons ;
In whose hearts, fallen blind fear, contend in flight !

And, yet more, weakened is the warlike force,
Of East-men, and discouraged their caterfs :
For Gormail, that fights with duke Hiradoc forth ;
And, in his targe, bears thirty Gaulish shafts ;
Perceived one, his nigh kinsman, whose blood had
Erewhile the hero shed, in far North parts ;
Fell Vergomar, who now rides in the *trimarch*.
This approached, from the backward, on swift horse ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Or ever men might warn, ward or withhold,
Twixt shoulders smote him ; and with so huge force,
His spear ran through warlike Gormail's ribbed chest :
Who fell down, bleeding carcase, without breath.
In fury, Icenians turning, Vergomar pierced.

Then Aulus sends out, his reliefs and aids ;
And light-armed runners, mingled with his horse,
To cut-off Britons, from their city walls ;
Whence women's shrilling shrieks now pierce all
ears.

From far, king Caradoc wounded, those have seen ;
And see how driven caterfs, before Rome-legions.

Clamour young warriors ; that, in idle camp,
Of Cartismandua, blame the lustful queen.
With hardy looks, before the gates of Camulus,
They clash bright arms, all, to their warlike shields.

In that, waked Vellocatus, from long trance.
He languishing, calls to him, all his powers :
For well, mongst mingled cries, he could perceive
Loud-tongued strange voice of nighing Roman
legions !

Him rousing, from fell dreams of dread and death,
He, faint, uprose ; and for his hauberk calls ;
Would arm him ! but eftsoon fails on the bed.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Then he besought the queen, send his young
warriors ;

Into the battle, in succour of blue Britons.

Went Cartismandua, as bidden of some god,
Out from the chamber, being ready dight ;
And standing on the wall, like Camulus ;
She uplifted, lo, sun-glittering, her bright glaive,
The sign of war, in sight of her young men.
Rise, in fierce heat, those young Brigantine warriors ;
Which followed have the queen, in their caterfs !

Nor longer tarrying, they, to field, break forth,
And battle, little curing keep their ranks ;
Eager to pierce, to hew the enemies' flesh ;
In succour of Brigantines and South Britons :
Nor waited they the queen. Shouting, outwent
They, in furious haste, their captains both and
ensigns :

And now, through Colne, plash their impatient feet.
Whence they leap forth, in number as a legion ;
To weary Britons' aid, and Romans smite.

Closed Cartismandua, in Cunobal's hard mails,
A silver morion whelmed on her tyred head,
(The whiles fell hope creeps in her serpent's breast,
That might she find Venutios hurt to death ;)
She, by the stairs, to Embla's court, descended :

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Leaps there on scythed wheels of her great sire's
 chariot,

Of iron. Her long-maned steeds, in hands stand of
One Calduc, her light steward : who now, with her,
Mounts ; and large pictured targe, before her breast,
Lifts, wherein effigied, lo, her saviour-goddess,
(Belisama,) emmailed, in many hews, is seen.

She who, in chamber, her luxurious limbs
Hath smeared with magic salve, help gainst war
 wounds,

Now shakes the reins ; and rush forth her swift steeds,
In Colne-street ; where she smally of impotent folk,
Recks, or of babes, though she should them o'erride.

Lo, in the porch of Camulus' city-gate ;
Where, softly, now the magistrates have him laid,
Is swooning great war-sire Caratacus !
Queen Embla stands, beside, full pale of face ;
For dread, and busy thought, towards her gods ;
Whilst druid leeches, kneeling, cure his wound ;
Which they, with cunning hands, have cleansed and
 closed.

But coldly, on them, bright Cartismandua looks ;
In that her shrill wheels issue from the town.

Seen how new Britons pass, so rathe, the Colne ;
Flavius (opposed, to them, his wide-ranged legion,)

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Severs, with hasty wedge of captive war-carts ;
Which, (with their teams, together, he had bound,)
Those battle-throngs. Rush Cartismandua's warriors,
Parted, by the two sides ; thick barbared bands.
This one he envelops, with vexillary¹ soldiers ;
That other hurl forth, to unequal fight.

They encounter, valiantly, with certain cohorts,
Set in await, (with whom the guard of Claudius ;
And Cæsar, in the midst, fenced round of elephants.)
They, naked, fight, with warwont, harnessed, soldiers,
That take small hurt. Young perfumed Briton lords,
Which guide, with gingling bits, their barded steeds,
Valorous men's sons, fall from their painted carts ;
And stain their glast-stained brows, and their bright
locks,

And party-coloured weed, with their own blood.

Which seen, queen Cartismandua beat her haunch,
For poignant grief ; and turns, as one dismayed,
Her cart ; with hope win back to the town walls.
Fast, after her, pursue young Roman knights ;
(Is Titus, and few, with him, Gaulish horse,
As falcon, greedy attain so glorious prey.)

White-armed, mongst the woad-stained, that
Northern queen,

¹ *Vexillarii.*

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

By freshness of her team, (she incessantly smites,
With ivory whip, upon their smoking croups,)
Them weary, outgoes : nighs now to Camulus' walls ;
(Her tunic fluttering, in this Summer-breath !)
Whereas, being hardly arrived ; with shame of face
And dool, again, the queen doth enter in :
The flower, well-nigh, of all, in so brief space,
Her young men lost. Who, from dune-wall, look
 forth,

See Britons travailled to and fro, in field.

Old men that, from the tower of Camulus, watch,
Behold most warlike nations of the Isle ;
How each from other, now, like boughs, dispersed,
Which shake forth winter blasts. Cut from the dune,
To covert of hill-woods, flee the caterfs.
Like fowl of broken wing, scape the maimed chariots.

Loud wailing ; and the city-gates are shut !
Weeping of wives, which stand round on the walls.
The gods of Britons seem to mourn aloft,
Which veil that welling passing radiance,
Of the unwearable sun, with skies,
As rusty gore : in whose now waning beams,
See druids, from lukewarm blood of fallen warriors,
In battle-plain, to rise disbodied spirits.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

And still, toward house of heaven, they upward
mount ;

Like evening dance of silver-wingéd flies,
O'er crystal water-brooks, in harvest month.

O'er fallen men and wide-strewed arms and steeds,
Pursue, still killing, Romans. Nor yet cohorts,
Turn, their victorious face, till may, no more,
They see field's blotted gore. Call them then
clarions !

They come, in the late twilight, to their *vallum*.
But not till shine, in vast night-camp of heaven,
O'er earth's dark face, high watchlights of the
gods ;

Weary with slaying, turn the knights of Rome ;
Besmirched their steeds, their harness and their hands,
With the cerulean Britons' barbared blood.

Soldiers that rest, in conquered soil, and sup,
At thousand watchfires ; with hope, recreate,
Of morrow's prey, their wolvis Roman hearts :
Whiles, fallen to-day, their wounded fellows lie,
(Not few,) yet, in wide slaughter-field, without :
Nor, till moon-rise, should there wend companies
forth,

To seek them, mongst the dead, from *castrum* gates.

This sun gone down, to light the underworld,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Of heroes and passed souls and ancient gods ;
Sits Claudius now, to banquet, with his dukes.
He drinketh deep ; and of the battle carps.
But soon they part forth, from fond Cæsar, weary :
Who sith all drunken, in his vomit, lies,
Alone ; and routs in his pavilion wide,
Of purple silk, midst Rome's victorious legions.

How dreadful is this shrouded night, abroad !
Wherein lies strewn dull bosom of earth's ground,
With her war-murdered sons, mingled with corpses,
Of stranger enemies, in much spilth of blood.
The agony, ah, is, of all their myriad deaths,
Now silent ; dread corruption only is,
Atrocious spectacle to those starry gods !

Sound frantic women's shrieks, from yond dune
walls,
For this great day of death ! None, seems, the world
Now hath, but wailing voice. Where, yester, was
A gracious Summer field ; whence wont, to sound,
Ruckling of sheep-folds ; and from meads of Colne,
The lowing of fat beves ; and dulcet chant,
From flowery haythorn, by the river's brinks,
To silver sickle of the moon, all night,
Of the heavenly nightingale, that cannot sleep,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

For love : (so gurgling, in his trance, exults
He, on the spray, the tardy night so chides,
That all did ring of his melodious voice !)
Now only springs the shrilling crickets' din,
And noyous fenny paddocks' bark, far off :
And night-fowl light, that follow warlike death,
On whistling dreary pens, with creaking joints ;
And clarions bray derne watches of strange legions.
Then sends out Aulus, servants of the legions,
Bearing some lanterns, other wine and bread ;
With guard and wains, to take up wounded soldiers.
Those wandering lights, see widows, from the walls ;
And faint their hearts, doubting were spoiled their
dead !

Have crowed now midnight clarions of strange
legions,
That, in their *castra*, sleep. Under derne woods,
Of the far field, approach to Camulodunum,
Lo, long-haired caterans¹ and tall gallowglashes,²
Footbands, which follow, from dim land of Erinn,
Carvilios' harp. And Ith, their naked king,
Them leads. And those had passed Vergivian seas,
By favour of god Nuth, in wattle-barks,

¹ Cateran, a kern or warrior ; from *cath*, battle.

² Irish, *galloglach*.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Hide-dight. And they are half-god Ier's seed,
Lineage of his two sons, Emer and Airem.

Are Erinn's caterans naked, from the belt,
(An hoop of iron, about their middles, bound ;)
And cudgyls arm and hurling-stones, their hands,
And thonged sharp darts : their captains bear iron
glaives.

Kynesians, some, Cruithni other bands
Are named ; for birds' and beasts' similitudes,
Seen scotcht in their tough flesh, or prickt, with
woad ;

And daubed on their light shields. Are other-some,
Maccon, (as who would say hounds'-kin :) yet some,
Which, Children-of-the-mist, are hight in Erinn.
With Ith, be priests high-shorn, upon their heads,
Culdees, (which Servants sounds, of Erinn's gods,)
And brehons, that declare the nation's laws ;
Men girt in long-haired weed, they *lanas* call.

Carvilios vates' githern's silver sound,
(Which the ever-murmuring gulf, Deucalidon,
Appeased,) from cabans, holds in misty woods,
And pits, like earths of salvage beasts, for bowers,
And caves of the wild crags, drew Erinn's sons ;
Which gathered to king Palador, at the shore.

Of all men, that beneath the stars have being,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Are those most poor. Ard-righ, (high, sacred-king,)
Is Ith ; who nephew named of Ier in Erin.
Wherein, what time deceased a naked king,
Is chosen some goodly child of priests and brehons ;
Whom in all innocence they, of life, upbringing ;
And void of malice, naked, for a sign,
He needs naught, who of kindred with the gods.
Yet hath he all, wives, cattle, house and field.
For in what place he enter, men account
Them blessed, which minister to him of all these.
Thus, without ire or envy or covetise, is
Ith arbiter, like a god, among their tribes ;
That, once a year, from Tara, hear his voice.

Ith, naked king, Carvilios' chant persuaded.
Then he, Ard-righ, banned, from that sacred mount,
War, gainst a stranger nation ; which doth vex
Britain the More, unjustly, and her oppress !
His middle girded, with an hoop of gold,
He arms nor harness hath, who bears no weed ;
Nor, on his feet, binds soles, in so great voyage.
Shines, in his amber-locks, a golden fret.

Now halted, in the moonlight, in the path,
Ith's host. All hail, with him, the rising god !
That cometh, with broad gleam, up, like to vast
torch ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Now climbeth in starry-steepness of East heavens ;
And pray, Give happy event, of their emprise !

They meet then, in vast heath, with fugitives,
Men of some Northern speech of the blue Britons ;
And those, that pass, in twilight of the stars,
Pronounce ; The bard is fallen, Carvilios !
Romans have overthrown the Britons' armies :
And fell king Caradoc, the high war-sire, slain !
Cumber, that fleeter were than roes, their knees,
The gods, and cloy their feet, then, in clay-ground.
At word of his Culdees, Ith cries ; They lodge !

There caterans slay and eat their evening meat,
Of oxen they had found : they chaw raw flesh :
So slumber, an hour, forth ; whilst Ith consults,
With priests, Culdees, that skill of divine omens :
Carvilios being slain, should they march on ?
Reads Corb ; and sware, by the Ard-righ's high hand,
(Chief priest is Corb of Neit, war-rage of Erinn ;)
His god would smite Carvilios' enemies.

All uprose, hastily ; and sithen, at a run,
O'er wide waste field and cold ; where now they rife,
Hear groans of wounded wights ; those Erinn's sons
Speed, stumbling, oft on corses, shields and arms :
For many, escaped from slaughter-field, with wounds,
Be fallen down in their blood. Then Cerig put,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

(Cerig, with Palador king, next under Ith,
Their thousands leads,) his finger in his mouth ;
And cast, in hollow twilight of night-stars,
Shrill cry ! and caterans all suspend their foot ;
The whiles he of some concerning Camulodunum,
Enquires : and seized on those new fear, of death,
In whose ears, enters Erinn's uncouth speech.

Sleep legions, battle-weary, and even the watch
Rest leaning on their shields ; when barbare shout ;
Sudden, thrown up, from far, is heard, Carvilios !
Whilst the moon wide, o'er bloody field, outshines.
As when some scour of wolves have pinfold found,
Fierce sons of Ier, that light on Romans' *vallum*,
O'erleap the dyke ; and pluck down thick pale-work,
Their barbare hands : and come, eftsoons, of Erinn,
The violent spears, to tents of Cæsar's cohorts !
That like cockt hay, they tumble to the ground ;
Slaying all whom they find, Rome's drowsy soldiers.

In that dark watch ; under their rushing spears,
Crispinus, first centurion of a legion,
Fell and Licinius, of the knights of Rome.
Was Amnius wounded, marshal of the horse ;
And Clodius, præfect of the Roman fleet,
Which stationed at Thames' side, was hurt to death :
Nigh Cæsar's wide pavilion, he fell down.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Cry went up, tumult in their leathern streets !
Came hideous strife, to the camps' *forum*-space.
With barbare yells, loud Irishry and strange
 Britons,
Night-*castra* invade, and smite victorious legions !

Under skirt-hem, of his wide-stretched pavilion,
Backward, with ashen visage, trembling Claudius,
Creeps ! steals without : so flees, alone, to tower,
Remained afoot, within the legions' *vallum*.

There heartless quite he climbs, who *imperator*
Of Roma, and without breath, as some mean soldier,
To highest scaffold. Panting, from the rungs,
Like flitter-mouse, he him flattens, then, in chink :
And, in his blind fear, quakes he evermore :
Whilst the stringed engines, in this dim night-wind,
Make murmur dread ; and Cæsar fears to fall.

In that, yet retching from his late debauch,
He, if he wake or dream, gins wonder fast !
What means this panic terror, in blind night ;
Laid he not down, midst his victorious legions ?
And, else, him-thinks ; and he, indeed, be Claudius
And wake ; yet never, in like evil case,
Was he, to this : not even when he him shrouded,
In curtains of Caligula's chamber door ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

What night, in Rome, fell the foul tyrant slain !
Whence drew him, half-dead, forth, prætorian soldiers.

Nor what time Gaius' servants, at his word,
Flung him, (the tyrant's uncle,) in Rhine-ford ;
For mockery : nor when he, in late sea-voyage,
Under sere Ligur's coast, was like to perish.
Nor since his swaddling-clouts, him-thinks, he was
Like villain wet, as Claudius is to-night ;
What for this flux, and for his coward sweat :
And for, in that, from tent to tower, he scaped,
A Summer shower, before the moon was falling.

Him liever were a night-crow be than Claudius !
Or quiddering swallow, neath these warlike eaves,
He himself devised. Then might he, safe, flit forth.
Would, on his bed, he were, again, in Rome,
Couched with some courtesan, to keep him warm !
No more would he, (he it promiseth to himself,)
O'er lands and seas, tempt these cerulean Britons.
Would gods now even, in Messalina's arms,
He were, his spouse ; (what-though misdoubts him
Claudius,
For every lithe-limbed libertine of his.)

And, aye, thrills deadly dread his craven breast,
Of some here lurking homicide enemies.
Shall Cæsar, living gods, and spirit of Julius !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

In barbare soil, mongst yells of salvage wights,
Perish ? Must he be cast away to-night !
How were Rome dimmed, to all succeeding ages,
If, of Etruscan folk, so great a lamp ;
If he, miscarried ! Over land and seas,
Should seem the Latin sun, no more, to rise !

Thus, like a cart-wheel, whirls his foolish thought ;
Aye, full of shrinking dread, in the tower-loft :
To hear those fearful slaughter-cries, aghast.
Shivers cup-shotten Claudius, at each sound !
He starts, gropes then, to find him some new sconce,
Among these grim *balistæ* and catapults.

Last Cæsar wries him, in hard leathern lap,
Of hammered ox-hide ; pitched, and two-fold plight
It is ; full, (that tower's apron,) of iron studs.
And, aye, his brow, yet totty of his must,
So swims, that now this tower he fears should fall !
He, all aghast, the ladder would truss up ;
Lest here him find his enemies. Ah, great gods,
Augustus, Julius ! Is it nailed so fast ?
Whence, almost, in him, dies his panting heart.
He felt, as through his reins, cold glaive did glide ;
And come is now dark death. In that, his spirits
Dismayed, he hears men mounting by the stair,
With barbare shout ! Him-seemeth his soul, then pass !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Ubba, tall captain of his Almain guard,
When Cæsar, in the imperial tent, he found not ;
Hath the *imperator* sought, on every part.
He, scornful, smally accounts now exile voice
Of Claudius, whom he finds, last, in this sort :
But drawn forth dazing Cæsar, by the hand ;
To stair-head, sternly, leads ; and bids dismount !
So brings on Claudius, in this moonshine, midst
Tall glittering spears, to Almains' place of guard.

Erinn's fierce rushing warriors, clustered bands ;
Fighting their naked king around, this night,
King Ith, the living ensign of their arms ;
(Hath every cateran, coursing their tent-streets,
In his first sleep, some Roman soldier slain,)
Discomfited had Rome's imperial *castra* ;
But that some enemy-god confused their minds.

As wind-flaw, out of the East's vast frozen jaws,
Descends, somehow, in forest, roaring wide,
Gainst the wood-gods ; and having felled large
path,
Mongst the thick beams, at length, breaks bellowing
forth ;
So leaving wake of bloody overthrow,
Those furious sons of Ier, mongst Cæsar's legions :

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Nor durst them, in vast hostile soil, pursue,
Which covers the night-shadow, Roman Aulus.

Few furlongs' way, those Erinn-men now passed,
The stars their lamp, and moon with shallow face,
Halt around Ith. The glaives, the spears of Erinn,
Drip enemies' gore ; and slimy is their weed,
Like to sea-wrack, with Romans' jelly-blood.

Yonder, lo, glimpsing lights, on Britons' walls ;
From whence they hear loud wailing women's voice.
But Palador's warriors, which know no fenced dune,
Mislikes, to enter within hold, that they,
Despise, as helm and hauberk of a town.

Whilst, then, the naked king, with his Culdees,
Takes counsel ; by high favour of some god,
Is found that sacred guest, avenged, of Erinn,
Now a cold corse, the warrior bard, Carvilios ;
Whose crowth, that from his warlike shoulders hanged,
Gives dulcet sighing sound, to the night-wind !
Watcheth the noble bard, a great white hound,
In bloody field, which nourished, known to all,
His cunning hand : and wail the men of Erinn.

Their spears they wipe then, all, on his fringed
weed :
And bury, in place he fell, in Roman blood,
The mortal part of that undying bard.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

His mantle-full, then, each one delves, of earth,
Mognet, who noblest, erst, with Palador
And Cerig ; then, at brehons' word, all mound
Isle Britain's mould, o'er Gaul's great vates, dead ;
Laid in his shining harness, arms and weed,
But the harp, king Ith uptook, of bard Carvilios ;
To hang in Tara's house, of his sun-god ;
Which aye, stirred of an heavenly wind, might sound.

This hastily ended, neath the bloody sod,
Of battle-ground, they leave that glorious dead.
Then, slowly, Erinn's bands ; for many are hurt,
Now towards West-shining stars, returning, march
Ere day was risen, they entered, in swart wood.

Ah, when shall this dark womb of Mother-night,
The morrow's day bring forth, with cheerful face,
Ambrosial dawn, wide-shining from the East ;
That seems, of righteous gods, new reign of gold ?
How tarries Belin's cart again to rise !
On wretched Britons, that night-long have waked ;
Day, which to dool and mourning shall be given,
For carcasses, that lie cold, on the clay-ground.
Far scattered were the glast-stained hosts, to-night,
In the wind and the rain : and fasting still, for
grief ;

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Men deem, in holt and heath, they hear their gods ;
That make lament, in forest skies, above.

Within wide-girding walls of Camulus,
Wakes Dread, and paceth up and down the streets.
Few sleep ; uneasy groans Caratacus.

As chiding woman longeth, in her pangs,
To bear ; so by her lord, Embla, to-night,
Much having watched, to see him wake and live.
From him, she wends, with dear constraint of heart,
(Daws now the day ;) to visit round the walls.

But, in that hour, the gods, that mourn, for Britain,
Another night whelmed, on her weary face.
Ride furious gusts the field ; is the dark grove,
With lightnings, rent. With immane thunder-sound,
Ruin the heavens, in rain ; and with sharp dint,
As shafts, smite hurled-out hail-stones, on men's
shields.

Were heard as divine voices, in thick mist.
Seems dry land then vast river rolling blood.

Under the dripping eaves of bramble banks,
Neath teil-tree, thorn, broad beech and great limbed
oaks ;

And where the squirrel leaps in dim pine-forest,
Shield them the scattered and afflicted Britons :
They cower, in brakes, a wounded multitude !

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Romans, when day is risen, yet keep their camps,
For hurtling rain ; which chaceth tempest's rage,
Of the wild wind. Their leathern tents, till eve,
Might hold, uneath. When goes sun's eye, at length,
Down, from that bloody brow of slaughter-world ;
Hand-clappings, strange ; and women's funeral chant,
Sound from the dune. Down-howling, from the hills,
Wakens this sullen night, then voice of wolves :
That even the enemies rue, which cannot sleep !

Now the after-morrow of that day, when Claudius,
(Whose inward aches, what, for the fear, forepast,)
Yet pale, beheld, nigh-hand, death's griesly face,
With Aulus and his præfect, of the camps,
The legions' tribunes, and few Roman knights ;
He rides, the situation and the strength,
To view, midst guard of horse, of Britons' banks.
Doth his heart boot, to see wide field of fight,
The enemies' gore, yet purpling as an heath !

Gazing those Roman captains, long, admire
Bulwarks of Camulodunum, gates and dykes,
Wide rampires more than banks of Verulam ere.
Vaunts gat-toothed Claudius ; Like Epeius' steed,
Those walls, of Britain's Ilium, soon o'erride,
Should towers of his. Then Aulus, in two *castra*,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

Departs his legions. Whilst shall that, yond Colne,
Watch ; should this other, in great Cæsar's view,
Begin the siege. He sends men, hew down trees ;
And frame new towers, for battery. And certain
horse,

Sends back, with Cæsar's letters, from these camps,
Bidding them speed ; and that by only night,
As fearing yet the spersed blue Britons' war-carts.

They rescript bear, unto that naval *castrum*,
Which by Thames' mouth. Servants of Cogidubnos,
Them guide by woods. The third day, they arrive.
The letters read, prescribe ; that sail the ships,
To Camulodunum, to the camps of legions.

Cælius, now naval præfect, drawn his fleet
Out, to the tide ; embarked his eager soldiers,
At eve : and sith, by covert night, stands forth
To the sea-deep, to shun the pirates' navy.

Blue Britons' corses all unburied lie,
This third day in the field, before the walls
Of Camulus. Even spoilers of the dead,
Pity ; so loath the carrion-hopping crows ;
And snarling voice of wolves sound in men's ears.
And, yet, ward many of the woad-stained dead,
Gaunt hounds, gainst howling wolves and all the world,

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

With grinning teeth ; and abay carrion birds.
Nor, hunger-slain, a moment, they forsake,
This third day now, their dead : mote spoilers pierce
Them, with their spears ; to reave, of their slain lords,
The bracelets, brooches, fine lawn weed, bright glaives ;
Collars of noble wights and charioteers.
But lest such charnel should breed pestilence,
Tribunes of legions, sieging round the town,
Send captive chain-bands forth, that, strewing earth,
Should cover, from sun's ray, blue dead of Britons.



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